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ABSTRACT

The Indian Nations At Risk Task Force and the National Advisory Council on Indian Education (NACIE) held joint sessions to hear testimony on important issues in American Indian education. This document presents statements given at 15 topical sessions and 3 additional sessions held for special groups. The 15 topics addressed were: teaching Native language and culture; academic achievement of Native American students and the failure of the education system; dropout prevention; teacher and administrator training, recruitment, and retention; substance abuse prevention; early childhood education; elementary schools and parent participation; middle schools and high schools and the question of boarding schools versus public schools; special education for handicapped, learning disabled, gifted, and talented; higher education, tribal colleges, and academic persistence; adult and vocational technical education; using computers, video technology, or other instructional technologies; education of urban American Indians; parent participation and empowerment; and partnerships of schools, tribes, communities, parents, and businesses. The three additional sessions were as follows: (1) a special session for elders to discuss their needs in the community and how they can contribute to Native education; (2) a special session for students and elders covering test bias, student recruitment, teacher education programs, and Bureau of Indian Affairs schools; and (3) an open discussion with NACIE and Task Force members. Most reports on issues include descriptions of exemplary programs, strategies that work, or recommendations for change. (SV)

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The Indian Nations At Risk Task Force
and
The National Advisory Council on Indian Education
Joint Issues Sessions
The National Indian Education Association's 22nd Annual Conference
San Diego, California
October 15-16, 1990

Proceedings from the Issues Sessions:

Native Language and Culture
Academic Performance
Dropout Prevention
Teacher and Administrator Training, Recruitment, and Retention
Health, Wellness, and Substance Abuse Prevention
Early Childhood Education
Elementary Schools
Middle Schools and High Schools
Education of Exceptional Children
Postsecondary Education
Adult and Vocational Technical Education
Instructional Technology
Urban Education
Parental Involvement
Partnerships of Schools, Tribes, Communities, Parents and Businesses
Special Session for Elders
Special Session for Students and Elders to Address the Task Force and NACIE
Open Discussion with NACIE and Task Force Members

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INAR/NACIE Joint Issues Sessions
NIEA 22nd Annual Conference - San Diego, California
October 15, 1990

"Native Language and Culture"

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Summary: "Native Language and Culture"

The first session on Native Language and Culture was co-hosted by INAR Task Force Co-Chair William Demmert and NACIE Council member Marie Cox. The second session on these issues was co-hosted by INAR Task Force member Hayes Lewis and NACIE Council member Helen Scheirbeck. The following issues, recommendations and successful programs were discussed:

I. The Impact of History

- For many years the thrust in education was to Americanize everyone, from the most recent immigrant to the oldest Native American on these shores, which meant focusing language instruction on English, the language of the school. This resulted in a movement away from developing or retaining one's Native or historical language base. More recently research has shown that when children establish a language base centered on their home or community language, they are more likely to succeed in school. We are also being told that it is possible to learn more than one language simultaneously without one interfering with acquisition of the other; and that the bilingual person can do as well or better than a monolingual person in many situations.

- My mother can understand our Blackfeet language, but she never did teach me because when she was younger, she was sent to a boarding school where they used to beat her for speaking her language. When I was in high school I took Blackfeet language, but I was only taught to count from one to ten, and that was it. The teacher just sat in a corner and beaded and we were turned loose in the classroom. My son is now in high school and he has learned how to sing Indian songs. But everything from our culture he learned at home from us and he isn't learning anything in school. So how can we get these things back in our schools?

- Apache high school students from the San Carlos Apache Reservation, who are learning their Native language for the first time, want to know why they did not learn to speak it as a child. The reason is that many of their parents finally submitted in one way or another to the education system's focus on acculturation and ceased teaching their children any language other than English. It is time for the United States government to undo the damage it has done by providing more funding so that more teachers can be hired to teach Native languages. If we are teaching French and Spanish, why not also teach Apache? But it also has to start with us. As parents we have to stop talking to our children in English and go back to using our Native language.

- Sometimes cultural traditions cause loss of language. The Acoma Pueblo are not allowed to record anything, and so even though some members still know the spoken language, it is being lost and this is a big problem. This is further complicated when Native Americans intermarry and then stop speaking their Native language even around the home. Over time we forget.

- While doing little work with the Hoopa language and working with all sorts of different tenses, I was amazed to discover a reflection of cultural interactive patterns among my relatives that I had attributed to oppression or some other factor. If you don't know your language, you cannot even appreciate the way it may be a mirror of your cultural values.

- I worry about the gaps. In Minnesota, and probably in Wisconsin also, our Native language was taken from us during the boarding school and missionary era in the 1930s. I still run into Elders today who were not allowed to speak their language and were beaten for doing so. I feel very fortunate because I was brought into this world in a family where our first language--Ojibwa and Chippewa--was spoken by everyone including my grandfather. But there was a cultural and language gap during that boarding school era and probably another one during the war. More importantly, when the prohibition era was lifted in 1952 and Indians could once again drink in public, our people became a lost people. We lost our language and our culture--just hung it up. Then from 1975 on, people started to realize the loss and tried to get back their identity as Indian people. The drums started coming back. The ceremonies started coming back. Native language is now on the rise in Minnesota. Thanks to the community college system and other colleges our language seems to be coming back.

- If we are going to be bringing language and culture into our elementary schools we really need to stress parental involvement and the fact that in the era when parents grew up, our language and culture was suppressed and denied. This is important so that parents have a sense of pride and so that children understand why it is important for them to relearn and retain their Native language.

- Some tribes like the Yaqui in the Tempe, AZ area are having problems receiving educational services because their historical experience with being from Mexico causes them reluctance in identifying themselves for fear of being deported. The Yaquis and possibly some other tribes should be given another chance to be recognized because they were only given three years and then enrollment was closed in 1980 and this did not give them enough time to register.

II. Preserving Language & Culture vs Pursuing Education - Is it Necessary to Choose?

- It is bothersome to consider how we are going to manage to retain our Native languages. Those of us who are Elders do know both English and our Native tongue. But I often hear younger people worrying that the more education they get the less Indian they become.

- On the other hand, some families whose children have been bilingual and have gone on to receive postgraduate professional training in medicine or in business feel that their son's or daughter's bilingual/multilingual ability has been a big asset to their careers and has not threatened their sense of who they are or their Native heritage.

- We need to keep our own languages, but it is also important to speak English which is the common language in the American school. The English is important because it is the language which allows us to communicate effectively with teachers, administrators and others in the society at large. School may not be the place for Native language instruction because it is not the common language.

- Socialization plays a strong role as children are growing up, and if they happen to be in a family that values and passes on their own language and culture, they will value that. Even though they go out and pursue an education, they will always come back home and participate in the language, culture, and ceremonies. But sometimes when young people go out into the mainstream, they start talking English and acting like the Europeans because they are around them all the time, and they lose their connection and forget their language and culture. So it is very important that we teach our children and grandchildren, and take responsibility for maintaining our culture, because if we don't, we will lose them.

- I'm a Tlingit from the Juneau and Chilkoot areas and I disagree that the more education you get the less Indian you become. I feel that the more you are educated the more you want to know about your own culture. The Tlingit language is still a part of my life even though I have been to college. My parents and grandparents couldn't speak or write English. My grandfather learned the Russian language from the priests because he was ordained to become a helper. So as a child I too learned the Russian alphabet and to read the prayer book. I enjoy speaking my Native language and will always want to pass it on to my children. I believe it is good to know your Native language and also other languages. Being bilingual and having learned English as a second language helps us to be tolerant of others who have difficulty speaking it. I work for Harbor View Elementary School as a counselor, and we have children who are coming from Puerto Rico with hardly a word of English. You lay it on them gently because you know you had a hard time learning it yourself.

- I am a Tlingit, born and raised Sitka, AK and I have always had a very curious mind. As a young woman I wanted to learn everything I could about our Tlingit legends. My father had gathered 200 of them, but that wasn't enough, so I went to Peter Nielsen, Sr., who is a nationally recognized artist, and from him I learned our art. Since then, everywhere I have been I have wanted to learn the language and know about the culture. I have learned the Paiute language when I lived in Nevada. When I lived in Washington State with the Yakima people--I am married to a Yakima 17 years--I learned the Yakima language. I discussed this with other women when I was in graduate school at the University of Washington and we agreed that wherever we were, we wanted to be with the people--be part of them. I want to live the Indian life wherever I happen to be.

- As our people become mainstreamed, they start believing the non-Indian ways and no longer practice their traditional ways. As a chemical dependency counselor, I started noticing this when I would work with young people--many of whom were brought up in white foster homes--who all of a sudden at ages 18 and 19 want to become Indian. They will say "I want to learn the songs. I want to learn the language. I want to know who I am."

III. Problems and Concerns

- There are nearly 6,000 languages in the world that are recorded and spoken. Of those only about 261 are languages with speakers who could be considered fluent and a majority of those are Native languages among indigenous peoples around the world. The proportion of 261 to 6,000 gives you some idea of how fragile the Native languages really are. To preserve them will take a lot of action, locally, nationally, and internationally. We have talked about it long enough.

- On the Blackfeet Reservation there is a need for non-Indian administrators and teachers to be educated in the Native language and culture. The Indian community is very close and the non-Indian school staff have their own housing section and do not participate in anything that has to do with our culture. If you are going to teach a child, you ought to know where they come from and understand their language, culture, and lifestyle.

- The Indian Education Association (IEA) Chairperson from Kodiak, AK thanked the Yupik Nation because they were the ones who inspired Kodiak to undertake their current efforts with their language. Many in our community say our Aleutic language is dead, but it isn't, because I can speak fluently and now that we have an alphabet I can almost read and write it. The problem is that we proposed the school become involved in providing instruction in Aleut and they threw it back to the IEA. I don't believe it should be our responsibility when they are willing to teach Spanish, Filipino, and other languages in school.

- As an Indian student advisor-counselor who works with both urban and reservation Indian youth in Tucson, AZ, I feel conflicted between my obligations to teach and tutor in academics and the need to provide cultural teaching. Kids who know the language fluently often lack the academics and vice versa, so it creates a conflict.

- As an inner city school teacher, who also serves as a member of the Los Angeles City Schools - American Indian Education Commission, I am frustrated at wanting to teach students about other cultures, but being unable to find any materials. It is important for Indians and non-Indians to know about American Indian culture to close the gap in understanding and unity, but we need to have materials we can use in the classroom.

- Some young people who want to know about their Indian heritage have a very hard time locating information or even someone who can lead them to information. A young man who was trying to find out about his Potawatomi Tribal heritage was unable to get help from the Indian education advisor and it was several years before we accidently located a 30 year old book that just happened to be on someone's desk in the BIA office. There has to be a better way for us to get information for children about their tribal heritage.

- I am Maidu and Washoe and full-blooded Indian. There are so many tribes in California, and we are so diversified and broken-up. Those of us among the northern and central-northern tribes who were gathered up and put on the Round Valley Reservation have become so integrated with other tribes--some of us are full-blooded Indian, but of 5 to 6 different tribes. I hardly know my language because of being tribally mixed. But when I was really small, I remember university people coming to talk to my great-grandmother and to collect information about our tribe. So there is a lot of documentation (pictures, tape recordings, wire recordings, etc..,) on many of the California tribal languages throughout the state and they are being held from us in university archives. I have made inquiries and finally found a lady who lived in my vicinity and had talked to my great grandmother. She obtained these wire recordings. But I would like to see more information from the colleges, especially the University of California, because it is the biggest holder of Native language and culture and won't relinquish any of that material to anyone who is not a teacher or in a graduate program. Since I am not a member of a federally recognized tribe, I am not recognized as a Native American. I don't count. I don't exist and it is really sad.

- It is sometimes tough for non-Indian teachers who really want to learn about the language and culture of the tribe whose children they teach because administrators will tell you not to go up into the community. Also in one Hopi community the tribe really didn't support my desire to learn about the culture, so I was under the opposite kind of pressure.

- On the Hopi Reservation we really don't have a commitment from the tribe to preserve the language and introduce it into our schools system, so we are really having a hard time.

- The Hopi have a lot of clans and the clan leadership gets really involved. Unfortunately they are not united in their primary expectations for education and what they want for their children. This really gets in the way. At the same time, the problems are so overwhelming you can't even figure out where you want to begin.

IV. Programs and Strategies that Work

- Among the Chitimacha Tribe of Texas it is pleasantly surprising to find that all of the tribal members speak their language, from the little ones on up to parents and grandparents. They explain this as the result of keeping their children out of school until age eight and speaking the Chitimacha language in the home. When they do start school at age eight, it is easier to teach the English, arithmetic, and everything else, and they still keep speaking their Chitimacha language. They catch up very rapidly in all other subject areas. It is too bad schools can't start providing programs to support this so parents don't feel they have to keep their children out of school.

- At the Navajo Reservation, one teacher teaches positive thinking every day early in the morning and skills next, and then tries to instill values in her students. Her area of the Reservation is cornered on all sides by really negative living that has been imposed by white people--specifically the prevalence of bars and the sad situation of Indian people, who should be role models, getting drunk all the time. This is the daily life that children see, so it is important to teach positive thinking as well as the language. All of us and Indian teachers and parents need to teach both language and values to our children to overcome this negativeness.

- In New Mexico, the Institute of American Indian Arts has been federally funded to establish a learning resource center. One of their projects is developing a curriculum to teach the English language via a new approach. They have organized it into 15 propositions--five in non-fiction and ten in fiction--based on Meyer's top level structures and Appleby's Story Grammars. This is important because they have young artists who do not think they have to learn about English and "white man's ways." They are trying to teach them that it is possible for Indian creativity and thought to be strengthened by this. By next year they hope to have a software package of a whole language approach to critical thinking and literary analysis to help Native people learn English. Within five years they hope to make this a bilingual program that will dovetail with Native languages as a foundation for creative tribal thought. This is very exciting because it is a new top-down curricular structure.

V. Federal, State, and Local Initiatives

Federal Legislative Update

- Patricia Locke, Hunkpapa Band of the Standing Rock Sioux and Mississippi Band of the White Earth Chippewa, Executor of the International native American Languages Institute, reported on the status of the Native American Languages Act (Senate Bill 1267), which was passed by the Senate and House last week and will be signed into law by President Bush on December 2, 1990. This is the result of two years of work and many difficulties had to be overcome, even though the act was supported by almost every education organization (with the exceptions of NIEA). The Act primarily recognizes the importance of Native languages and declares it to be the policy of the United States to preserve, protect, and promote the rights and freedom of Native Americans to use, practice, and develop Native American languages. It encourages exceptions to the teacher certification requirements for teaching Native American languages and encourages use of Native languages as a medium of instruction. Federal agencies are required to evaluate their policies and procedures in consultation with tribes and report to Congress on changes they can make. This is the first federal statute since 1780 to specifically turnaround the government policy to suppress and really destroy Native languages and culture.

- Ms. Locke further discussed several laws that are already on the books in support of multilingual and multicultural Indian education but are not being implemented:

  - P.L. 100-297, Section 5106 (formerly 25 CFR 32.4) which stipulates that "The Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs shall, through the Director of the Office of Indian Education Programs, provide for a comprehensive multicultural, and multilingual education program including the production and use of instructional materials, culturally appropriate methodologies, and teaching and learning strategies that will reinforce, preserve, and maintain Indian and Alaskan Native languages, cultures, and histories..." This has been in the CFR since 1979 but the BIA has refused to implement it. Now that it has become a statute, the BIA is required to do so, but for 1990, 1991, and 1992, they have not asked for any money to implement it.

  - P.L. 100-297, Section 5106 also requires the Assistant Secretary to assist tribes with development of departments of education, educational codes, and plans. Again this has been part of the CFR since 1979 but has not been implemented. It has been a statute since 1988. Despite having no money, six tribes--Northern Ute, Southern Ute, Tohono O'Odham, Pasqua-Yaqui, Red Lake Band of Chippewa, and Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa--have enacted language and culture codes which their tribal governments require within the exterior boundaries of their reservations. These codes are very comprehensive and they have the full force and effect of law.

- Ms. Locke recommended that the Task Force (1) help the President implement the Native American Languages Act, (2) require that the BIA provide money so that P.L. 100-297, Section 5106 can be implemented, (3) urge NACIE to adopt the 27 Indian education policies that are now statutory for the Department of the Interior, but not for the Department of Education, and (4) request a funding increase for Park Service's Tribal Cultural Heritage and Historic Preservation Grants program from $473,000 to an amount more adequate to fund the 270 tribes who applied for a total of $10.1 million.

State Initiatives

- After looking at the recent research, educators in the Northwest Territories of Canada felt so strongly about the importance of Native language and culture that they passed a law requiring instruction in Native languages in the primary grades and then instruction in Native languages as a subject area in high schools. So Native language is declared an official language and it is required for school graduation.

- In Oneida, Wisconsin we have a tribal school serving 240 kids in grades kindergarten through 8. We also have 1,034 students in five public schools surrounding the reservation. The only place we can offer language is in our tribal school and there is a distinct difference when comparing our students to those who attend the public schools. Tribal school kids are very happy and their self-esteem is high. They are doing well and there is a lot of parent participation. Over the past number of years we have tried to institute language and culture in our public schools without any success. This past year there has been a lot of controversy in the northern part of our state with regard to fishing. Out of this has evolved state legislation called Act 31 which mandates that all public schools must teach Indian history and culture twice in the elementary level and once in high school. The focus of this legislation is the 13 tribes of Wisconsin because the local population is not aware of who we are and what we do. Language and culture are so vitally important, that without such instruction we begin to lose everything.

- The Indian Education Center for Excellence, in New Mexico has just entered into a new partnership between 22 public school districts and Indian tribes of the state. We are in the process of developing a five-year strategic plan. In previous meetings between district superintendents and tribal leaders, the issue of integrating language and culture into the curriculum has come up many times and is considered very important. The other issue of concern is the cultural inadequacy and inappropriateness of methods and procedures used for assessing academic success. This is especially important since tests are so often used as gatekeepers that can limit future opportunities for our youth. We also need to create databases that profile our students and that identify exemplary programs so that we can share ideas.

- There is also a move at the state level in New Mexico by the State Bilingual Advisory Committee to establish committees from each tribal group that would certify Native language speakers from their own tribe as being fluent in the language and knowledgeable about the culture. Tribal recommendations would then be forwarded to the State Department of Education for verification and endorsement on a person's teaching license.

Local Initiatives

- Lower Kuskowim School District in Bethel, AK has 23 schools serving 3,000 students, 19 of which provide instruction in the Native language up to grade three, when the transition to English begins. We have 270 teachers, 200 of whom are Anglos. We are looking for some kind of academic preparation by the teachers to fully understand the Native students and what we've been going through the past couple of years has been very troublesome. In teacher negotiations we asked that teachers become academically prepared with at least six credits of our Yupik language and culture before they become permanent. There has been severe teacher resistance to doing this, while the board and parents feel it is absolutely essential. Teachers argue that they can become familiar with our language and culture just by being there. Our stand is that they need formal academic preparation in these areas. We have added incentives to the negotiations by (1) offering every teacher a $1,000 across the board raise, (2) offering a one percent increase over three years, and (3) offering to pay for all of the courses and materials. But the teachers said absolutely not, so it has been very difficult and I am not sure how you formulate a successful policy. Possibly this could be mandated through a state or federal policy that is stated in terms of culture and language of the area served.

- The Puyallup Tribe in Washington state has been involved in implementing a language program for the past several years. One of the problems they have identified with their grant writer is that there is no category within funding organizations around the country for addressing language development and research per se. We have introduced culture and language into the public school system and we have an elementary school on the reservation where it is taught in third grade. Our language is relatively intact, and was well documented in the 50s and 60s, but we need to be able to put our language into instructional methodologies and learning packages that can be used by the schools. Another area we would like to stress is that giving Indian Education Parent Committees more authority (beyond advisory) would really enhance our efforts. Every time we mention something that goes against their perceptions or stereotypical attitudes (which are very conservative and negative), they say that we are an advisory group and they don't necessarily have to do what we say.

- Over the past 10 years, Title V parents in our California district have done a lot of hard work publicizing different people that they want to elect to the local school board. This has paid off since we have had about four people serve on the board who agreed with our ideas and supported meeting the needs of our children. This has resulted in a lot of activities and programs that have been helpful.

VI. Recommendations

- We need to establish standards, definitions, and precise plans when we talk about teaching Native languages because tribal members talk about it but do not have a clear definition in mind. We need to agree on the approach we will take (comprehensive or just teaching words) and on qualifications for teachers. After these are in place, the tribe can establish priorities and if it is important, ways can be found to fund it. For instance, only 14 percent of the Jicarilla Apache still speak their language, so we talk about it a lot, but when you walk down the street you can't have a Native language conversation with somebody else that goes further than "hello."

- It is a real disservice to bring non-Indian teachers and administrators into an Indian community and not provide a strong cultural orientation program. Without this orientation there will likely be many mis-communications and mis-representations of needs, and so forth.

- As a Hopi teacher who also works in Tucson with the Yaqui tribe, I believe that teachers, who are hired by the BIA to come out and work on the Reservation, must have some sort of commitment to the children they are serving. They need to have an orientation program where teachers get language and cultural education and also have the chance to spend time adjusting to the culture and to the isolation of the areas. Without this they tend to leave at anytime during the year and this is a big problem. Secondly, parent advisory committees in different school districts need to receive training so they will have knowledge about policy and what they can and cannot do with their power. Without this knowledge parents feel that they do not have power, and our districts just railroad through whatever program they feel is appropriate.

- As an industrial development specialist for the Navajo Nation, I feel it is impossible to attract outside industries or to get the tribal leaders to appropriate any funds for economic development. I believe that tribal government and economic development should be incorporated at the local school level and then it could be the basis for all sorts of curriculum development.

- I am a Maori (New Zealand) doctoral student from University of Utah in Native American and Polynesian Studies/Education. Our Maori people were historically forbidden to speak the Native language, but now there is a renaissance period of renewed interest. I believe in emphasizing both language and culture because they reinforce one another. The language is what keeps the culture alive, and without it one does not understand the ceremonials and other cultural events. Elder Maori people had the foresight to develop a preschool program which is conducted completely in the Native tongue and has been a factor in the revival of the language. I recommend a truly bilingual approach rather than one with the sole aim of getting children to speak English. Both should be given equal value. I also agree with the need to provide alternate certification to Elders who can be vital in teaching the language and culture.

- If you are an Indian parent, and you have a parent advisory committee, you need to begin your discussion there, to have your points of view represented to your local schools. But you must also take personal responsibility, whether it is learning the language or the culture, to make this an important issue for your children, then other things will start to come into play in terms of resources and opportunities.

- We need to commit funding to people in smaller tribes such as those in California, so that they can use the resources of their Elders to preserve their language and culture. We need to do this now--it is urgent, because these Elders are old and they are dying.

- We should compile a list of cultural and language regeneration projects across the United States for Native people. Universities are a very important resource for these projects.

- We need to watch the evolution of the Smithsonian museum and see how we can tie in some of these concerns to what they are developing, because they do have resources in this area.

VII. Higher Education and Credentials

- Native language and culture teachers should be credentialed to teach in public schools on the basis of their life experiences with their own language and culture, rather than on their college degrees and graduate degrees. The University of New Mexico is going to give a special Navajo language endorsement to qualified teachers that are certified. But this is just the initial step. It is not possible to take any more than a few courses in Navajo language, so you can't get a masters or Ph.D. in the subject. It is only considered a subject within a major in Southwestern studies, rather than as a modern language.

- Within institutions of higher education, educational policy should recognize the acquisition of second languages (spoken and written) as a legitimate field of study. American Indian languages should not be labeled as "foreign languages."

- Many institutions have no place at all in their curriculum for indigenous North American languages. Some academic programs only recognize European languages as the languages of research and publication. They even exclude Asian scholarship. There should be an increased long-term commitment in educational policy to teaching and research in Indian languages with administrative funding sources. There are some small temporary programs in existence now, including the Cherokee Culture and Language Institute (Irvine) and the California Indian Project (UC Berkeley). It seems very important to achieve institutional validation of studies in American Indian languages by establishing permanent institutes. This need is made obvious if we look at much of the anthropological literature by non-Indians which makes accounts of "vanished tribes" and "dead languages." A case in point is the so called "Mission Indians" of Southern California. Two tribes, the Tongva and Acjachema, known through the mission labeling system as Gabrieleno and Juaneno, have over 2500 members and descendants, yet they are not recognized tribes. Officially, they have "vanished" and their language is considered dead, yet there are still a number of Elders and adults who speak it. There need to be efforts by researchers to preserve these languages.

- Prescott College has a certified Indian Bilingual Teacher Training program that was started just recently, and this may help the Hopi people preserve their language.

- As Indian student advisors, we do a lot of footwork by visiting in homes, finding out about the child's background, and trying to resolve problems we find. So we're social workers and psychologists without a degree and we use a lot of our own judgement and feeling about situations we encounter. I agree with the woman who said we need certification to acknowledge our life experience as qualification for what we do.

VIII. The Importance of Studying Tribal History

- All schools that serve Indian students should offer courses in Indian studies at all levels so children can know their past and know who their heroes are too.

- Students have to study American history and world history in schools, but what about tribal histories? Our young people need to know about our experience in this country with the United States government. This should be taught in tribal schools and in public schools. We now control our destinies and we should tell our histories. We talk about tribal sovereignty and self-determination, but it is time we acted and told President Bush that Indian people are demanding what they should have had a long time ago.

- The Wall Street Journal this morning talked about the monument to Custer at Little Big Horn. One woman was trying to change the monument so that there would be a monument to honor the warriors of the Indians who fought there, especially since the Custer monument depicts the Indians as hostile. The woman defended her position by noting that Custer was only there one day, while the Indians were there a long time before he came. That is what education should be all about.

IX. The Special Challenge of Urban Areas

- How do we keep language and culture alive in urban areas that are not home base? The Intertribal Friendship House is in Oakland, CA and serves urban Indians in the same area served by Oakland Public Schools, which is currently in a little bit of financial trouble. There are many other cultural groups in the same area, and trying to melt all of those cultures together is a real task. In the schools, the new superintendent, who is trying to bring financial stability to the system, is against having curriculum which is specifically designed to recognize different cultural groups. And of course, they are broke and so are we, so that is limiting. Also, because of our numbers, the Indian population is probably the last to be recognized in the curriculum anyway. The Native language issue is complicated by the fact that there are a lot of tribes represented in the urban population. The Oakland City Council is trying to address the multicultural problem, but not very assertively. California's governor is not real supportive of Indian education and vetoed a bill which resulted in elimination of some long-standing programs. Our program tries to work with the community to promote cultural values (rather than language) and we try to get parents and the community to emphasize to the school board that we exist and we will apply pressure to have our needs served. We will even remind them of the protest at Alcatraz. Anyway, we need to hear how to promote the recovery of cultural values in our type of urban setting and how to institute them into the school system.

- Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN, Charlotte, NC, and the Urban Indian Magnet School in Buffalo, NY were cited as strong examples of urban programs that serve multiple Indian tribes.

INAR/NACIE Joint Issues Sessions
NIEA 22nd Annual Conference - San Diego, California
October 15, 1990

"Academic Performance"

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Summary: "Academic Performance"

The first session on Academic Performance was co-hosted by INAR Task Force co-chair Terrel Bell, and NACIE Council member Margaret Nelson. The second session on this issue was co-hosted by INAR Task Force member Byron Fullerton and NACIE Council member Margaret Nelson.

I. Indian Students Aren't Getting the Basics

Local School District Perspectives

- I did a little survey in my school in Montana and found that out of 180 school days, our students attend regular classes for 140 days because we are pulling them out for Title V, Bilingual, and other such programs. Our ACT and SAT test scores in Montana are two or three points lower in Indian country than in any other public schools. So we have to work something out to pull things back together because kids are missing the basics. I have heard encouraging things about how well Indian education is doing, yet I listen to speakers here and read an opening speech from an Indian education leader 20 years ago, and they are saying the same things.

- On the reservation at Gila Bend, AZ, the student body is mixed with both non-Indian and Indian students. About 50 percent of the eighth grade class did not graduate and that 50 percent happened to be mostly Native American kids. So we are very concerned about this problem.

Postsecondary Perspectives

- I teach in a tribal college, so I get the results of the public schools, although the problems could be in the boarding schools or any schools. Basics are very necessary and it seems the public schools really cop out when they teach American Indians. They do not understand Indian people or their culture. They would rather turn their heads and ignore the situation than take a risk or rise to the challenge of really educating Indian students.

  I am a native Californian and I attended a public school in the hills of Fresno County. I tell my friends I was very fortunate because we had three teachers who didn't care who you were. They taught you well all the way through. Today that same school system is not doing this for my grandnieces and grandnephews. This is true nationally across Indian country where public schools have to educate Indian children.

  It is so important that we have the basics. I teach college freshmen and sophomores and many times our students are not ready for college because of their public school background and in some cases because of their boarding school background.

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- We handicap our students when we do not insist that they learn the basics. Students who come to the university are not ignorant. They are not stupid. They simply have not been given the training that is necessary and we must find ways to introduce them to materials so that they will be anxious to learn. We must not handicap our students by making it too easy.

- I'm from Oklahoma and am a former classroom teacher and educator. I am also a scholarship officer; I wish we had enough money to take care of all of the applications we receive for higher education, but of course we do not. We have a dropout rate of between 35 and 40 percent, and basic education is really nonexistent for many of our students.

Employers' Perspectives

- In private industry we are seeing children, both Indian and white, who are lacking basic skills. I am a parent, not an educator--so you may throw rocks at me--but I feel that we may have spent too much time on some of the fancy things and frills of education and forgotten the basics. I have people working for me who can't read and can't count. If it were not for computers that tell them how much change to give back, we'd be lost. So I think we need to look at this, because it is a serious loss.

- I am from Phoenix School District Number One, I am a parent, and I am also in private industry. I do not work with the schools or with educators. But I do work with a lot of Indian dropout students because we hire a lot of laborers, and the story is really sad. I work with a lot of Indians who can't read and can't add, so when I give them a list of things to do, they can't handle it. I don't want to sound negative, but I worry that we pamper our Indian students and don't put enough pressure on them to achieve, and it is really sad. I have spoken with them and I hear them say, "Well, you know, our teachers tell us that Indians are always late and we don't run on time schedules." I have to say, "Look, I'm not a teacher, I am a businessman. You get here when I tell you to get here. Don't tell me you're an Indian. That is a cop out." I hear them say, "Well, our teachers used to tell us we don't compete, so we're not a competitive nation." I say, "Well, if you are going to survive in this world, you've got to learn how to compete."

The Ultimate Cost of Failure

- I worry about the 60, 70, 80 percent unemployment rates on our reservations in Montana. Thirty percent of our state prison inmate population is Native American. Over 50 percent of our Indians in Montana are now urban; the unemployment is driving them off the reservations. In the urban areas they run into housing discrimination and stereotyping that will just blow your socks off. Five percent of the Montana population is Indian. So I am wondering, as an educator, what can I do?

  Of 500-600 state workers in Montana, I can count five who are Native American. We are not getting into these jobs. As an educator, how do I get my kids ready to go out there and take over Montana? If we'd organize, we'd be a strong political power, but we have to start someplace. We need to educate our kids, get them out and train them to come back and fight that unemployment and the drug and alcohol problems.

II. Structural Issues and Failure of the School System

Defining the Problems

- I taught school for 25 years in the public system and never had the opportunity to teach Indian children. I moved back to the reservation near Pendleton, Oregon ten years ago. We have no culture teachers in our school system, other than the Caucasians. Last year I talked to the superintendent of schools about some of our concerns for Indian children in the public system. He said, "Marguerite, do you really think that the Indian people want to have their children educated?" Well, I immediately jumped out of my seat and hit the desk. I said, "What do you mean? We want exactly the same thing that the non-Indians want for their children!" So I think this Task Force needs to get the information out to everyone. It needs to be publicized. It can't just stay on a shelf and get dusty, because we need to get this information to our public school systems where the majority of Indian children are going to school. We have to change the mind set of our public school and BIA school teachers. They must understand that our children are just as capable and academically inclined as any other children.

- I am a school board member of the Tuba, in a public school system, and I am currently being recalled. I haven't finished my two-year term yet. I am also a BIA special education teacher.

  My main concern is that many of our teachers in public and BIA schools are not accountable. We have teachers' unions in our schools and they should at least be trying to make the teachers accountable for teaching our children. We have teachers in both school settings who have been there too long--15 to 20 years. They are receiving comfortable salaries and have no interest in being asked to undertake innovative teaching techniques like team teaching and cooperative learning, or in educating themselves about the learning styles of Indian students. I graduated from the same school district 17 years ago, and some of my former teachers are still there. When I ran for school board, the union was strongly against me. You would think that my former teachers and counselors would support me, but this was not the case. After next Tuesday, October 23, I expect to no longer be a board member, but that's fine. I will go ahead and reinvolve myself through the PTA to try to get our teachers to be more accountable. I feel that we have allowed our teachers' unions to become very powerful and defend their members no matter what. We need to find ways to make our teachers more sensitive and more inclined to try different teaching styles that will better serve our Indian students.

- The flaw in education that results in its failure to find those gifts that each child has is related to its traditional focus on curriculum or the teachers. It is not a child-centered educational process, but if it were, we could probably find these gifts at very early ages. But we are still using the European model of education that came over to this country and was originally designed primarily for the rich and affluent.

- I am from the Ute Indian Tribe in Fort Duchesne, Utah, and I am a higher education and ABE counselor. In my district, I have found that my tribal members have been very low achievers because they have been downgraded. Right now a lot of my tribal members cannot even get through college. So we have had to develop an on-site program that is basic education for continuing on to college. But I would say that the educators from my district have failed my tribe. Many of our high achievers have not been recognized and they turn around and just drop out and become drunks and alcoholics.

- Having spent 13 years in the public school system and also being a product of the BIA system, I can say that for the most part, the American system of education has failed the majority of Indian students. American education has been fragmented and reduced into blocks of time called "Carnegie Units," and in the process of doing this, we are losing a lot of our students. When I was in the BIA school system, I was labeled as an "at-risk" student. All the years I have been in school I was either labeled this or that and I have never been given the opportunity to say that I have a different learning style or to have a school take into consideration the whole element of my environment and my culture as something relevant to my education.

- On the Tohono O'Odham Nation, we have schools that are still under the Bureau and teachers that are just transfers from other BIA schools. This is not too good because many of these teachers have been in the system too long and are only interested in their paycheck, rather than the education of these students.

  Another thing that is really hurting us is lack of funding. Also, if we are going to succeed, we need to start focusing on early childhood education.

- I am the vice principal of Browning School, a public school in Montana that has the largest Indian enrollment in the state. In terms of academic performance, one of the problems we see is the transition of students transferring from one place to another. Many of our students leave our school and attend off-reservation boarding schools for a certain length of time. It seems like the Bureau accepts students for whatever reason, or the courts send them there. They do not have any consistent requirement for accepting students. After they have their "count date," it seems like they look for some reason to send them back. What happens to those students is that when they return to the public school they are anywhere from 6 to 14 weeks behind the other students. They have no consistency in their academics or grades, and they have fallen behind, so they are not eligible for extracurricular activities or athletics. They become frustrated, so they return to the boarding school in January and return to us again in March or April. They have then fallen even further behind academically. This also happens when students move from one public school to another.

- Our education system is anachronistic--it is still based on the Gregorian calendar which was done away with years ago. The education system in this country gears our Indian students for failure.

- Education is so essential for our young people. I think they must do well, and anything we can do to improve their academic performance is critical. I've been in education for 21 years and retired this summer, so academic performance is something I'm personally very much interested in. Too many of our children are in public schools where the administrators and teachers do not pay sufficient attention to their needs. We have to make them aware of what the situation really is and how they can help and perhaps persuade them to do so. It is a rather long row, but I think we can hoe it. I think it can be done.

Restructuring the System

- I am an advocate for restructuring education. I feel that reforming a system that has never really worked for the majority of our children is of no value. I think we need to look at every single education issue.

For instance, I think we should restructure the school day. Cognitive research tells us that 90 minutes is a natural time frame for getting involved in, experiencing, and coming to a conclusion regarding a new concept that has just been introduced. So the 50-minute hour is not enough and is not congruent with what we know about how people learn. Furthermore, since families have a lot of problems with adequate child care, I believe the school day should coincide with the parental work day. We should be able to take our children to school when we go to work and pick them up on the way home.

- I have worked with the Title V program in an urban area for nearly 12 years. Our program serves three school districts, the largest of which has 42 schools. One issue we have is that Title V in urban areas often is the main agency that is available to meet family, community, educational, and cultural needs, but its programs are poorly funded.

Also our largest district found Indian students and other minorities to be disproportionately represented in Chapter 1 and special education programs. They are now taking a serious look at all aspects of their system to find out why this is so. They are considering factors such as teacher expectation, teaching strategies, curriculum, and disciplinary procedures.

I am hoping that within two years we will have a significant turnaround in these numbers, but I wanted you to know that at least one district is addressing the issues. This came about because minority parents banded together and insisted that something had to change. The superintendent responded by appointing a racial justice task force to examine all of the contributing factors and make recommendations. Also a study was conducted by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. They found enough issues that the superintendent decided to appoint a Council on Educational Excellence and Equity. They will be looking at all of these issues over the next two years.

- About 34 percent of the Indian students who come to the University of California cannot read, write, or understand math and science concepts at the level we would like. But I am not sure we are being too easy on our students. I feel strongly that there are many problems with the public schools and this is why I favor restructuring.

Our students do learn differently. Their learning style, including the way they receive, process, and retain information, does differ, and until we have special state credentialing for teachers of Indian children and additional training in Indian education, we are going to miss the boat.

- I think there should be some types of guidelines to address the issue of students who move back and forth between schools within a semester. The Bureau should put together guidelines for accepting students. There should also be services for transferring students, so that when they do enter a new school the transition is smoother.

- When approaching school boards about hiring aides or offering special instruction, one of the biggest barriers we run up against is money. They don't have the money or can't allocate it this fiscal year. One of the beauties about being a federally funded agency is that there are many grants available to us as tribal members for continuing education and remedial education.

By having us identify the need within the district and then supply them with the grant, the district is able to put money back into its schools for serving the special needs of our students. Then as administrators, we in turn can hire the instructors and the teacher aides, and we can put together a culturally sensitive program in addition to providing tutorial and remedial work. This kind of grant assistance is available through the tribal councils.

If your tribe is not organized in such a way that an office or individual is responsible for research and grant writing, then you need to approach the people who are involved in education and who are receiving federal and state grants. They will know where to look in the Federal Register and may have useful information available regarding application for one-year to three-year mini grants that will enable you to go to the school board with resources in hand. When you can do this, you can tell the board that this will serve their students, make them look good, and help Indian students succeed. The resources are out there; it just may take a lot of phone calls to Washington.

III. Student Assessment and Competency Testing

Defining the Problems

- I work for the Indian Education Center for Excellence in New Mexico, and our Center recognizes the importance of having public school districts and tribal leaders work together. This was the reason why we established the Center. We are also concerned that our Indian children in public schools are often left out. We are especially concerned about the indicators of academic success because the methods used to identify success are sometimes invalid for our people. I think we need to bring our way of life and the academic life closer together to determine how they can complement and support one another.

Increasingly in the last two years, we have seen measures of academic performance serve as gatekeepers to future opportunities for our youth, rather than addressing the problems they face. As an example, the New Mexico Legislature passed a state competency law in 1986 that requires students to pass a competency test before they receive a high school diploma. If students do not pass that test, they receive a "certificate of attendance" rather than a diploma. Without that diploma, they cannot hold any state positions in New Mexico. We have also heard comments from the private sector, corporations, and foundations, that they do not recognize the certificate as being valid.

Currently the test is paper and pencil. It was not developed in New Mexico, although the State Department of Education was involved. They used the expertise of individuals who were associated with other national testing organizations. State law says that students who come from different cultural or linguistic backgrounds can develop their own alternative methods of assessment, but we haven't been given the time to do this yet, although the law has been in effect since this past spring.

The Center for Indian Schools was developing a Native American competency testing program, but the focus was to determine whether students are really ready to enter 10th grade, so we would have three years to work with those students who have deficiencies.

Tribal representatives, Indian educators, and members of the Center's board who are also school superintendents feel we have not been given enough time to address problems related to remediation for those students who do not pass the competency tests or even to analyze areas where our students may be deficient. We feel the State Department has a responsibility to do a test item analysis of the instrument. This past year, 50 percent of the Indian student population taking the tests as sophomores were unable to pass. Now we only have two years to work with them, and we don't really have a clear idea of the problem areas.

- Last time I checked, there were over 30 states with these minimum competency testing programs.

- Assessment is an issue that is really atrocious. I work at the Sherman Indian School in Riverside, CA. The BIA requires that we test the children with the California Achievement Test (CAT). The CAT is based on the California State framework, yet Sherman Indian School does not have the state-adopted textbooks. The reason for this is that no money goes to the state for BIA schools. BIA does not send Impact Aid money to the State Department of Education as it does for the El Toro Marine Base. The Marine Base Impact Aid money goes to the state and comes back in curriculum and textbook purchases. To make the insult even greater, there is no textbook budget in the BIA funding. So we cannot get on the textbook list and we aren't in the state textbook cycle. As a result, for instance, our health education textbooks are 15 years old. Most of the recent diseases are not even addressed in the curriculum.

- As of Fall 1990, Montana is using the ACT scores now as one of the requirements for admission to college. One of the requirements is composite score of 20 on the ACT. If you look at the statistics, you find that minorities and poor students score a lot lower than white students. For example, Indians score an average of about 14 composite on the ACT compared to the national average of 18 to 19. In Montana, the state average is 20.

I think we need to do some research on this with Educational Testing Services and the College Board to determine whether or not these tests are culturally unbiased and fair to American Indians. We also need to take a position on use of test scores as they relate to college admission.

Promising Programs and Strategies

- I am from the New Mexico Department of Education and I coordinate the statewide testing program. For the last couple of years, I have been working specifically in the area of testing as it relates to Indian students because it has been a major issue in our state.

I remember reading articles in the past that always started out with headlines like, "31 percent of Indian students score lower on tests." This kind of headline creates a very negative image, especially for the students. I know this because I worked as a counselor of Indian students for nine years.

So the Department is trying to do something different. For example, test scores are usually reported in the aggregate across all Native American tribes in the state. When we look at them individually, we find that test results vary widely from tribe to tribe and from school to school. So in order to more clearly identify areas of strength and weakness, we are now looking at scores on a disaggregated basis. We are finding that there are some districts in New Mexico where Indian students are scoring very high and we find certain programs where we are really seeing improvement in test scores. So we know that we have some programs that are working. This helps us get away from the totally negative picture that results from lumping everything together.

Another strategy we have used is to examine the concept of testing itself. I personally have been interviewing Indian students to get more qualitative data and ideas on the issue of testing in Indian culture.

All state governments are going through this accountability reform movement and are having to do more testing. This year New Mexico is ranking schools by test scores, which we feel is stepping 20 years backward. As a result, Indian schools are coming out at the bottom of those rankings. Although much work has been done to improve tests, and we have looked at cultural bias in testing, this really hasn't changed anything. I believe that the whole concept of testing is culturally biased, and so in New Mexico we are looking for other assessment strategies.

- North Carolina also has a state competency test which is given to everyone in the 10th grade and then again in the 11th and twice in the 12th grades. So students have four opportunities to pass and must only retake portions they failed to pass. Our Indian students have done well considering some of the test biases in terms of thought processes. We do not, however, have language problems.

- In looking at assessment, we have taken the standard deviation between the CAT subscores or the GPA. The greater the distance between the scores, the greater the academic potential we feel students have. For instance, if a student has an A, two D's and an F, this tells us that the student has high probability for GATE programs because the A shows what they can do given the right learning styles and the right approach. On the other hand, students who are making C's across the board are probably working up to their potential. We have found similar potential with students whose CAT scores vary widely. For instance, they may score high on math concepts and low on math vocabulary. I am currently doing research with a control group at Sherman Indian High School and will be writing a paper on this issue which I hope to have published.

  So many of our students learn by hands-on experience. They are what we call tactile or kinesthetic learners. They can watch a lab experiment, or see how a problem is done, and they will understand how it works, but they can't explain it. So if you take the vocabulary scores out of the composite CAT score, I find Indians students' scores are considerably higher. This suggests that there is still a problem with language barriers.

IV. Teacher Competency and Accountability

- Increased reliance on student competency testing leaves the door wide open to the issue of competency testing for their teachers. Since all schools now have computerized their testing, grade, and attendance records, databases exist that can break out the records for individual teachers. It is significant to find out what percent of those students not meeting minimum competencies are coming from what groups of teachers and from what school districts and areas. If our students are paying a price for someone's ineptitude, it is not unreasonable for us to band together and demand to see the numbers of students who are being penalized because of teaching errors and abominations that are committed in our classrooms. This information should be in the public domain; it would provide us with a tool to readdress the issue of students' competency and focus attention on teacher competency and relevance to our students.

- I am a superintendent of schools from Montana. Everybody stresses that we have to have Native American teachers; yet our Indian teachers are having a hard time passing the National Teachers Exam.

V. Stereotyping, Tracking, and Low Expectations

Defining the Problems

- Stereotyping on the part of our educators who work with Native American students is a major problem and a self-fulfilling prophecy. When students are told that they are not going to succeed, they live up to these expectations. There is also a lot of prejudice and discrimination in the system. We have teachers who have never really been exposed to Indian culture except when they teach the students. They don't really understand the people they are working with.

  Teacher expectations are really important. I was a high school principal in a school where we had one teacher who was very demanding of his students. They were scared of him, but they performed and they always did excellently on the achievement tests. However, the same students who did really well in this teacher's class did very poorly in other classes where the teachers had lower expectations.

- I work in the Juneau School District in Alaska. One of the things that concerns me is that our district has a lot of programs like special education, resource room, emotionally disturbed and behaviorally disturbed programs, and it seems like the Native kids are overrepresented in these programs which sends out a negative message about our children's abilities. Kids don't want to be identified as Native because they see so many other Native kids going to these programs. At the other end of the spectrum, we are underrepresented in the gifted and talented program. We are having a dialogue with district administrators to try to change the ways they identify and select students for these programs. At present they use the Iowa Basic Skills, an I.Q. test, and teacher recommendations. But often the decisions are made primarily on the basis of the test scores. These tests are biased against Native children.

- Eighty-five percent of Native American children attend public schools, which shows the importance of reaching public school teachers and administrators and convincing them of the need to help serve these students. Research shows (and I certainly agree) that if a teacher doesn't believe a student is very capable of learning, the result will reflect that. But if you have a positive attitude, if you believe in your heart that this child has a lot of potential, the child will rise to that.

- I was told recently that many of our gifted and talented children are not identified because they are underachievers due to having a negative attitude about why they should achieve.

- I am concerned about the problem of those Indian students who "fall through the cracks" in the public school systems. My uncle is on the school board in our district, and we seem to have a lot of things going for our tribe, but Indian kids are still falling through the cracks.

  We have a GATE program which serves our gifted Indian students. But my son, who is a really strange kid, is an example of the problem I am talking about. When he was growing up, we called him "witch" because he sees ghosts and talks about really strange things. He is getting older now and he is learning not to talk so much. He scored in the 90th percentile in math and the 99th in verbal ability, but he was never recognized as a GATE student. In the seventh grade he took the SAT exam and scored 950, but because he is culturally strange, people think he is weird or they ignore him. He has Indian values and this sometimes affects the way he reacts to situations. In fact, if you talk to him, he won't respond and he is lacking some skills. In the ninth grade he couldn't use the public telephone. He didn't know how to use it and put a bunch of money in and lost it. So he is kind of a crazy kid, but it seems to me that the test scores are undeniable evidence of his giftedness. A long time ago, he would have been recognized as a witch, but now these things are held against him. It seems a tragedy that he was never identified for these special programs.

Positive Expectations and Recognizing Success

- I'm sure you are aware of a survey that was done a few years ago, where grades were switched. Students were given tests to identify the high and low achievers. Then the teachers were given students who were high achievers and told that they were low achievers. Other teachers were given the low achievers and told that they were really good students and ready to excel. All through the semester the students' grades reflected the teachers' expectations which were the opposite of what the students were theoretically capable of achieving. We need to emphasize the importance of a positive approach. If we expect our students to do well, they can and will, but we need to encourage them and build in that desire and incentive.

- If we teach our children that they can succeed, or if we teach our children to give up, either way we are going to be right.

- All I hear from my white friends are negative things about Indians and their education. But it is important to acknowledge that some of our Indian students are doing much better than they have done in the past. Just this last school year, of all ten students in our county who qualified for the Moorehouse Scholarship there were only two Indians, and they received the only two awards. I think is it helpful to share these successful experiences to help our brothers in other parts of the country become more competitive in the "white man's world" where we are judged. Indian kids need to see that some of our people are doing well.

- Indian students who are successful could at least be recognized by their local high school newspapers. Perhaps a column could be devoted to the Native American students who have accomplished outstanding achievements. They always recognize the athletes, so recognizing academic achievement is needed and deserved and is something that could be undertaken on a local level.

- I am from Sells, AZ, and I am representing the Indian Oasis School District and their Education Committee. When we tested our kids, the academic achievement levels went down, especially for those kids at the top. The administrator said not to worry because the kids at the bottom did very well. I think this is because there are a lot of programs for kids at the bottom and nothing for those at the top. So they are telling us not to worry and to forget about the kids who are the cream of the crop. We are pushing for a gifted program, so now they are starting to do something about this to serve the top 10 percent of our students.

VI. The Importance of Integrating Native Culture into Curriculum

Defining the Problems

- The program I am running catches students who, for a variety of reasons, are unable to succeed in school. So ours is an afterschool dropout program that serves students ages 18 to 35 who have been out of school for more than one year. In dealing with their lack of success in school, we find that it is closely related to self-esteem problems.

- One of the basics that we need to introduce into our curriculum is the culture and the value of the language to the Indian child.

- I have noticed in my own family and in the group of urban Indians I'm involved with that we don't know very much about our tribal culture. We know sometimes the tribal name and sometimes even the band and where we came from, but living in the San Francisco Bay area, we don't really know very much about our tribes.

- I come from a public school district where we have a Native American program in the district, but it doesn't seem to be meeting the students' needs. I have suggested to teachers that they encourage the district to start including units on Native history and culture in the curriculum. I don't know what the first steps would be for someone like myself, as an individual, to take to proceed.

- I believe we need to have a more positive attitude about ourselves beginning with the history books and the ways Indians have been portrayed historically. We need a more positive reflection of our contributions. We have a significant Native population in the Juneau community. As many as 20 to 25 percent of the students are Native American. So we are working with the district to try to bring in programs that better reflect the Native community. Also teachers are required to have multicultural training.

- At one point, if you worked as a teacher on or near a reservation in Montana, you were required to take six credits in Native American studies. Resistance to this requirement was so strong that it almost started a teacher riot.

Promising Programs and Strategies

- In order to get Native instruction into the classroom, concerned parents would be advised to approach the school board and the person on the school district staff who is responsible for making recommendations to the school board on curriculum adoption.

- In trying to integrate Native curriculum into the classroom, I have run into a lot of brick walls in my 12 years of teaching experience. One thing I have found is that you need to get the backing of the local community when you are going to go to the school district or school board. One place I worked where we had success with this was in Sitka, Alaska. The whole school district had only one Native American teacher and they were lacking Native American curriculum as well as approaches to building self-esteem. But we got a core group of people together who worked to address both the curriculum issue and the affirmative action problem to increase hiring of Native teachers. The brick wall we ran into was the school board. We had the backing of the Native organizations, and eventually the teacher organizations followed. First the local teachers union backed us, and then we got the Alaska Teachers union to back us. So it is a real local community involvement process to get Native curriculum into the schools.

- I work for the Fremont Unified School District. I am a credentialed teacher, but I work as an aide for the Native American Studies Program (Title V and Title VII) in the San Francisco Bay area. As an aide, my jobs are to tutor our students and to teach culture classes in grades K through 6. I have also been able to attend a lot of the district's workshops that are held to reinforce new programs being established. As a result, I have become very much aware of what is being taught in the K through 6 classroom. I am working to establish a curriculum in my culture classes that can strengthen what teachers use in their classrooms.

We will be studying the Northwest coastal cultures this year. Students will be keeping journals in class. In addition to learning about the tribes and talking about various aspects of their culture, we will be doing carvings. We will also learn about the topography and geography of the area and about the various states and countries that have been involved with those tribes. The program will also include sentence and paragraph writing. So I am hoping to reinforce the regular teacher's instruction by integrating it into my program. Also, as a tutor, I know where my students' basic skill weaknesses are and can help them work on those areas through the culture curriculum. The math and language arts activities we do will be strictly for fun and will not be graded, but I am looking forward to seeing their journals and encouraging them to improve their math and writing skills.

- I worry about the long-range. I believe in the traditional family strength in Indian country. I believe in the culture and the language. I think it is a key to overcoming our drug and alcohol problems in Montana and in Indian country. We must get back to that strong traditional family and listen to our Elders. We started a grandfathers' and grandmothers' program in my school district where the Elders come into the classroom. For some reason the children in that room are really learning when the grandparents are there.

- Our JOM tutor aide is now home-based and works with children after school. But the school district sometimes feels that because they have the Title V program in the schools, they are doing something to help Indian children, when actually it is a band-aid approach. This year when the school people said that they really needed the tutor, I went to the superintendent and suggested he match the funds if he wanted the service. I think as Indian people, we have to get vocal.

- We are trying to pull a cultural heritage project together which involves the Elders. We find that a large number of people interested in our program really do not know where their roots and traditions lie. So to address this, we have begun to recruit Elders. We are using a curriculum from northern Michigan called the Red Cliff Wellness Program, which focuses on Native values and customs. We are using it as a teaching tool in the high schools and in the elementary schools, and we are trying to get a computer company to put it together in the form of a software program.

VII. Promising Alternative Instructional Strategies

A Right-Brain & Left-Brain Approach

- As principal of the Native American Magnet School in Buffalo, NY, I want to tell you that our school is part of the regular public schools and for the past two years, with a prevailing number of minority students being Native, we have experienced a measure of success in academics. I would like to share with you how that came about:

  A few years ago at the NIEA Conference I heard a presentation about "hemispheric specialization" and how that matched Native learning styles. I then did some research within my own school and found similar results. I found that around 70 percent of the Native children were right-brain dominant, while the traditional American school is very left-brain oriented. Thus it is no wonder that Native children fall behind other students (especially on testing) from the very beginning. When I made that statement to the school board in an attempt to get money from them, an African-American board member asked if I knew anything about hemispheric specialization in regard to black children. I said I did not, but would be happy to research that if they would give me money to do so. They agreed, and we developed a learning style preference test that was administered to Native Americans, black, Hispanic, and Caucasian children. Again, we found that 69 percent of the Native American children tested in Buffalo were right-brain dominant. We also found that 58 percent of the African-American children tested were right-brain dominant. What really topped it off was that 54 percent of the Caucasian students were also right-brain dominant. This was different from previous research findings I had studied. We also tested a large sample of Hispanic students because we have two large bilingual schools in Buffalo and found that 39 percent of the Hispanic children tested were right-brain dominant.

If you look at those percentages and then realize that over 90 percent of the schools in this country are very linear, sequential, left-brain oriented, and focused predominantly on development of language and literacy, it is clear that many students aren't being appropriately served. In responding to our findings, we did not choose to advocate one approach over another. Instead, we connected hemispheric specialization to four learning styles: two that were linked to the gifts of the right brain, and two that were linked to the gifts of the left brain. We then developed a program to assist our teachers in teaching to the whole brain. It has required a little bit of teacher in-service to become successful at a more balanced approach, but we have been doing this.

We found that for right-brain children in a left-brain setting, literacy was a primary problem. So we have adopted a "whole language" approach. As defined by Australians and New Zealanders, this means that there is a mode of bringing about emergent literacy through a holistic view, teaching from the whole to the part. There is no question that this helps right-brain children.

I went to a BIA boarding school when I was in high school, and I was one of the very few kids who took physics as a senior. We had a teacher who taught physics through a trial-and-error method. He realized that if he would give his students a holistic view of what was in the chapter, they would do better. So he would first give us an overview, and then teach the parts. So he was doing the same thing because he had discovered through trial and error, that it worked better.

So, if you are looking for ways to integrate Native studies into the regular curriculum, you have to show success not only for Native children, but also for the benefits that this will provide to non-Native children. We have a model in the Native American Magnet School in Buffalo, and we are helping our students realize academic success. In conjunction with the ACES Conference scheduled for November in Buffalo, we will be publishing an article about this data in their magazine, Changing Winds.

Moving Beyond Textbooks

I teach high school science at the Window Rock High School in Arizona, and I have worked for a number of years as a biologist. I was fascinated by the discussion on right-brain and left-brain dominance, because I think the reason scores are so high in the biology area is that today's children are all T.V. watchers and Walkman listeners. They don't read. There really needs to be an emphasis on reading and teacher lectures and bringing in interesting materials besides a text. That is what I do in my classes and it is pretty successful. We discuss current issues and I team up the successful students with the low readers. I have my students keep journals. I do a lot of imaginative things to integrate the culture into my classes, and I have been gathering materials over the past ten years. As I was telling a textbook vendor here at the conference, culture is being made now, so why not have the kids start writing a lot of their own things down and then using them as materials. Another approach I have used is to have the kids do lab experiments and then we videotape them to show to other classes. They find a lot of humor in this, but they also learn.

Integrated Curriculum and Cooperative Learning

For the past four years I have been teaching reading and writing at the Ogalala College on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. The primary reason that I became part of the staff there was that four years ago they were still having a dropout problem in the college. Thirty-five percent of the incoming freshmen were dropping out in the first semester and we were really concerned.

We began to do some assessment testing in math, reading, and writing, and we found that 35 percent of the freshmen students were reading and writing below eighth grade level. These were students who had a high school diploma or GED certificate. Fifteen percent of entering freshmen were at eighth grade level, and the remaining 50 percent were reading at tenth grade or above.

In the past four years we have been able reduce our first semester freshman dropout rate to 10 percent through a cooperative program among the math, writing, and reading programs.

With this knowledge in hand, last year I became principal at Crazy Horse High School in Wanblee, South Dakota. My approach has been to integrate the curriculum and reduce the fragmentation, so that English and social studies classes are integrated and across grade levels in grades 9 through 12. We also use a cooperative learning model with outcome-based direction; and students are in the class for two-hour blocks of time.

The teachers are teamed so that each team includes two English teachers, two social studies teachers, one Chapter 1 teacher, one psychology and careers teacher, and one cultural language specialist. We use the whole language approach and have our students reading and writing much more than if they were in fragmented classrooms studying under one teacher.

Applying Special Education Strategies

We have found that special education techniques (not those for behavior disorders or learning disabilities), such as establishing performance goals and objectives, sequentially analyzing materials, and setting up principles and expectations that allow the kids to get down to work, actually work splendidly with our students. We also have found that with a one-to-one student/teacher ratio and use of computerized instructional support, the student's average academic growth is almost 1.5 grade average for three months of instruction. By making sure that the curriculum addresses the academic and social needs of the students and showing them their progress with the curriculum, the students' self-esteem just explodes. They are given levels of success that are far above what they have encountered in the regular educational setting. We also find that selecting teachers of Native American heritage, with special education backgrounds, is an ideal combination to help our students succeed.

As a special educator, I just happened upon this discovery because we lacked curriculum in our dropout program to help students make it through high school and through the transition out into prevocational or postsecondary education. We had to condense material they were supposed to cover, sequence it, and test them frequently so they could progress to certain proficiency levels. We know that use of computers and computer management skills is extremely important for future success in most industries and jobs, so our program is computer-based. Student progress has been outstanding--the vast majority of our kids just rip through the material. This indicates that they were not failing school per se, they were failing to produce the responses that were required of them by regular teachers.

Initially students are somewhat intimidated by the computers, but we use the PALS program, which is extremely basic yet moves students rapidly through the steps beginning with "What is a keyboard?" "What is a computer?" Within weeks, they are already starting up their own programs, running them, and scoring themselves.

VIII. Other Promising Strategies

Training for Instructional Aides

- In our district, we have an Indian education program which funds two teacher aides. They are not certified teachers, they have very little training in this area, and have never been given any in-service training. They are itinerant, which is to say that they serve a caseload of 96 students scattered among 13 schools. I just don't think that this is an efficient or effective means of addressing the special needs of Native American students.

- I am very aggressive. I first went to my director and got her permission to approach the district. Then, I called up the district head of elementary education and said, "I am an aide and a tutor in the Native American Studies Program, and I would like to attend any of the teacher training workshops that you have." They said I could and put me on a mailing list for workshops. So all through the year I attended workshops at the expense of my program. I would just go in quietly and sit at the back of the room and soak up everything I could get. This has been really helpful to me and has improved my tutoring abilities. So I recommend an aggressive strategy. It is especially helpful to attend the new teacher training workshops. They are very, very basic and really give new teachers techniques they can use for teaching math, reading, and writing. If you can get your aides to do this, it will really strengthen the program.

Extra-curricular Activities as a Motivator

In Montana, basketball is king in athletics. To improve our academic standings, we have incorporated a simple eligibility plan that if you don't pass a class, you don't participate. All of a sudden parents are coming up to me and saying, "Geez, my kid is opening books." They want to participate, and we have about 80 to 90 percent involved in some kind of activity. They want to play ball, they want to play in the band, they want to go to the speech contest, so they are opening their books.

An Employer's Approach

- Sometimes I worry that we take away from our Indian students by trying to give them too much. We want them to keep their culture and their ways, but there are times when they have to learn to cross over the fine line. I have had a couple of employees who went back to school because I put strict demands on them. I told them they wouldn't get paid if they didn't finish the job. You know they have learned how to keep time schedules and follow through on things.

It is razor's edge that our young people must walk, with one foot in one world and one foot in the other. But if they are going to succeed in the non-Indian world, they do need to learn to do these things.

IX. The Importance of Parental Involvement

- There is lack of parent involvement. Almost all of our parents want their children to get an education, but they do not know what education is. They do not have Readers Digest, National Geographic, or even a dictionary in their house.

- The key thing is parental involvement. We have a lot of kids from dysfunctional families. In looking for ways to pull them into school, we decided that if a kid is ineligible for activities, we have a 90- minute study hall after school. Parents have to come in with their kids and sit with them through these study sessions. It is the little goofy things like that, which have helped us.

- I teach adult education at the Denver Indian School. We are all educators speaking here today, and we are all into pushing our children into education. I am educating people whose academic grade levels are zero through three or eight. One of the reasons they want to learn is so they can teach and work with their children. They want to be able to read to their children. I think this is so important that I am standing up here shaking while I talk about it, but we have to educate parents, too.

X. College Preparation versus Vocational Education

A Question of Emphasis

- We seem to put an emphasis on students who go to college. I wonder whether we put more emphasis on college entrance than we ought to and whether we might be ignoring some students who simply are not college material--never were and never would be--but they can perform academically very well in other areas. I taught in a public school where we had an outstanding vocational education department, and it served students who were super achievers, but not college material. They didn't want to go to college or simply didn't have the background. Is there a feeling that too much emphasis is being placed on qualifying students for college?

A Parent's Perspective

- Speaking as a parent, we can't afford to teach our kids everything, whether they go to vocational school, college, or any kind of postsecondary training. We also can't afford to say, "Well, put that kid on vocational," because some of them are not going to speak up.

  My child went to a school that didn't even have any advanced placement classes and she did all right. In fact, she was valedictorian of her class, but there were only 50 kids. But she can do it out there because we live on the reservation. I was a pushy mom in terms of parent involvement, and I wouldn't allow anyone to tell her she couldn't do something. If you want to do it, you go for it, and if anybody tells you you can't, well just try it anyway, and I will stand behind you. So now she is a sophomore at Stanford and she is getting straight A's. So we parents are the key. We're the first teachers, and we have to tell our children that they will come into contact with other people who aren't as supportive. We have to give our children their identity. I told her, "Never forget who you are." That confidence of knowing who you are means you know what you can do, and it goes back to the culture.

All students need the basics regardless of whether they want to go into vocational training or college or whatever. They all need to know math and science, even if they are going into vocational training. My daughter needed to have calculus, and I had to send her somewhere to take it because by the time you get to Stanford you are supposed to know the basics.

Tribal Perspectives

- I'm from the Tohono O'Odham Nation in southern Arizona and I am here representing both the reservation and the Sherman Indian High School where I serve on the school board. I support the push for college preparatory emphasis if it is necessary. I say this because in Sherman School's situation, we have to promote a college focus for the school's survival. We all know that Indian boarding schools are being pushed aside. Right now we have an enrollment of close to 500 students from 77 different tribes. A lot of students don't come prepared, but they do have an idea of what they want in life, and that is very important.

- Every time we go into a high school or college setting and try to label kids as either vocational or academic, we have a major problem. There is always a question or debate about academics versus practical education. In my life in the Indian world, education was a lifelong process. It was not something that you received a diploma for and then got a job. Life was meant to be a process of learning. Until we get that kind of a picture, we will not begin to address the real needs of American Indian students.

Postsecondary Perspectives

- From the grey roots on my head, you know that I have been teaching for a long, long time, so I speak out of experience. Many times our Indian students are labeled and programmed to fail. But as someone said in the main session, "success defines success." Once you get students into school and they have some academic success, it really changes their values and their self-esteem. I had a student who entered the carpentry program. He also took some other courses like vocational accounting in order to get his AVT. He did really well in accounting, and so he changed his major to business and has done very well in this. This has happened to many students. Yes, there are many who need vocational education, but from my experience, those young people will find out themselves whether they should go to vocational school or college.

As Indian people, we find that many of our young people who have the potential are not directed into the college curriculum simply because they are Indian. Then if and when they do get to college, they are behind and have to take extra courses to get the college preparation basics that they missed in high school. I have had students tell me that counselors told them, "You will never make it in college," and some of them now have masters degrees.

- I am a recruiter for California State University at Chico and have been doing this for a number of years now. The first factor is that most Indian students believe they are going into vocational education. They don't believe they are going to go any higher in education than they are. I think the emphasis we need to make as parents and as educators is to support our children to consider all options and opportunities. We also need to find out about the requirements and how to get into higher education.

We receive information from counselors and from community colleges, but we don't know about the exceptions. We don't know about the minority students who are getting into higher education under those exceptions. When we go out to recruit Indian students and try to convince them that they do have the qualities to go on and obtain a college degree, we spend most of our time talking with them about their self-esteem--just to get them to fill out the application. If they can read and write, there are opportunities and there are support services at the college level that most parents and students don't even know about. So recruiting Indian students is a very, very difficult job because you have to convince the student to apply, you have to convince the parents that they need to support their student, and then you have to sort out how to apply for financial aid so the students will get the services and funds they need.

In fact, only a very, very small group of Indian students go on to college. I don't believe that our Title V programs are focusing on this. Most Title V programs I know of are trying to keep kids in school. College-bound students are basically underserved because they are doing okay and most teachers don't let them out to attend special programs.

Several years ago, we were trying to recruit minority students into law school. We knew that if you wait until the student is ready to graduate from undergraduate school, you have waited too long to recruit them for law school, because many times they have not performed well enough academically to get in to law or any of the other professional schools. So I developed a program that was aimed at high school students. We published a book entitled, "So You Want to Be a Lawyer," and we put that in the hands of every high school counselor in the state of Texas, so they could talk intelligently about what it took to go to law school. You can't wait until you are a senior at the university to discover that you have got to have certain academic requirements to get into law school; you have to know this before you start college.

Now I think college recruiters should start at the elementary school to inspire a child to have goals to go to college or to be a teacher. One of the problems I have found in the teaching profession is that it does not tend to attract the top of the class. You want top flight students as teachers; you don't want the bottom of the class to come in and teach your students because the chances are they may not know as much as the students do.

I work at the University of California, Santa Barbara campus, and have also worked at the community college level in California. I believe we must prepare students for college level work regardless of their future plans, because--at least in California--both college and vocational postsecondary training require this preparation.

College admission in California is based on the entering student having a grade point average of 3.0 or better. We know that our Indian students aren't prepared to earn B's in every subject they take. If they can perform at a C average level, then they are prepared for either community college or vocational programs at the community college level. In California we are not as fortunate as some other states that have private postsecondary vo-tech schools where the BIA pays a subsistence stipend for students to attend. Students in our state must compete for limited slots at the community college level for vocational training programs. If you are interested in becoming an LPN or a beautician, you must be prepared in the sciences and mathematics to compete with other applicants for those enrollment slots. If you are planning to be a welder, a carpenter, or an auto mechanic, you must also compete and need strong preparation in math.

INAR/NACIE Joint Issues Sessions
NIEA 22nd Annual Conference - San Diego, California
October 15, 1990

"Dropout Prevention"

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Summary: "Dropout Prevention"

The first issues session on Dropout Prevention was co-hosted by INAR Task Force member Ivan L. Sidney and NACIE Council member Gloria Duus. The second session on this issue was co-hosted by INAR Task Force Member David L. Beaulieu and NACIE Council member Buck Martin.

I. Defining the Problem

- The problem of dropouts is not only a school issue: it is a family issue, a community issue, an issue for our tribal governments, and also a state and national issue.

- On a national basis, we are losing about 35 to 45 percent of our students in high schools between the time they enroll as freshmen and graduation. This is much higher than the national average and we need to provide services to these students to keep them in school, through graduation, and help them to continue their education beyond high school.

- At-risk Indian students are not only those at the high school level; they include students in all grades kindergarten through 12. They start dropping out in the early grades--some in fourth and fifth grade. So we need to start identifying and serving them at early ages.

- In our district the Indian students' dropout rate is phenomenal. The overall district dropout rate is 2 percent, but 40 percent of those who drop out are Indian. They have alternatives. We have an alternative high school or they can take a district correspondence course. But often we don't know where they are; they just vanish and this is our big concern. If there were some kind of accountability among those who are supposed to be responsible, perhaps we wouldn't be in this dilemma.

II. Contributing Factors

Studies Identify Multiple Factors

- In Browning, MT, some information was collected about the factors that cause students to drop out. Based on information collected from parents, students, teachers, and community members we identified ten top factors. In order of priority, they include:

1. poor grades
2. drug and alcohol user/abuser & poor school attendance
3. drug and alcohol affected
4. lack of self-esteem
5. abused and neglected
6. physical and sexual abuse
7. defeatist attitude towards school
8. discipline problems in school
9. pregnancy and teenage parenthood
10. young parents lacking parenting skills

One of the things that did not come up was poverty, although that is a big factor in the community, especially since we have a 60 to 80 percent unemployment rate. We live in poverty every day, so perhaps our community does not identify it as a factor the way national studies do.

- Dr. Brandt, co-author and one of the researchers on the Navajo Dropout Study, reported that, in addition to community and parental factors mentioned by others, their study had determined that lack of challenge in the curriculum and the tendency of teachers to underestimate students' abilities is a factor in discouraging students. There is a tremendous amount of boredom in the Indian school curriculum as well as blatant racism. I think we have particularly underestimated racism in schools, especially those in border towns. This is a problem we don't really want to confront, but it is increasing in many regions.

- Red Lake Public School District in Minnesota, which serves a population that is nearly 100 percent Indian from the Red Lake Reservation, found that all of their dropouts were overaged Indian students in the high school. Eighty-eight percent were two years older than grade level, and 11 percent were one year older than grade level. So there is a direct relationship between the failure of schools to educate kids and those who drop out of that school district.

Failure of the Education System

- Our public education systems have clearly failed our students. Our students have not failed; it is the systems we have created that have failed. If you look at all the issues related to the dropout question and the symptoms of Indian education, whether it be dropouts, pushouts, or academic failure, I believe we need to consider restructuring our systems and organizations so that these children feel that they are participating in a process where they can be successful. I was labeled as a student at risk and I was in a system where I was told that I did not belong. This message can be delivered by tracking, fragmentation of a course of studies, anything that causes Indian students to develop low self-esteem and expectations of failure. In time you begin to believe that you will fail no matter what you do.

- I work as a teacher in a Denver adult education program that serves high school dropouts. One thing all these students have in common is that the traditional school system failed them. They did not fail the system. They were also all categorized in school as dumb, as slow learners, as belligerent. When I failed, I was categorized as "emotionally immature." That is a good one, and to this day, I am still trying to work on my emotional immaturity.

- Some have said that all students are gifted, and you know they are. But we have a bunch of vials and vases that say "You are gifted," or "You don't quite make the grade," and so forth. So we have labeled all these classes of students. Once they've been labeled, who are they trying to keep up with? Where does their self-esteem come from? These are things we have to look at if we are going to salvage those kids.

- Another problem is that there is a big transition for students when they go from self-contained classrooms in elementary school to subject-by-subject classes in high school and this transition is not managed very well. The difference in style is one of the factors that loses a lot of Indian students. So schools in Minnesota are trying to improve this transition.

Teacher and Staff Attitudes

- My father's last name used to be Belintigen, but when he went to work for the Southern Pacific Railroad, the person who hired him couldn't spell it, so he changed it to Ben, which is now my last name. A lot of times young people enter the classroom and our names aren't good enough. Then the child wonders if he or she is good enough. This starts some Native children off with two strikes against them.

- We have such a terrible time trying to find Indian people to teach in public schools. As a substitute teacher in Fort Peck I found a major problem with non-Indian teachers. I believe that the biggest contributors to dropouts in grades K through 12 are non-Indian teachers who don't know how to relate to Indian children. They have a detention center at Fort Peck, and rather than trying to deal with the kids on a one-on-one basis, they send them to detention. If I were one of those children, I think I would probably drop out, too.

- A woman from Tacoma, WA reported that her children were in a public school and received no program that gave special emphasis to their Indian culture. To this day teachers still make fun of children's Indian names. Many children today come off the reservation still speaking their own language, but they are given no special consideration as learners. They are simply passed on to the next grade, or put in special education classes so the schools can get more money for them. The public schools in Tacoma are more concerned about the Cambodians and the Japanese. The Bush Administration needs to place more emphasis on meeting the educational needs of America's Native people.

  I pulled my children out of public school and put them in an Indian school where they are doing much better and learning a lot more. Our school doesn't have any dropouts. We keep the kids in school and we give them special recognition. They learn their language and their culture and take pride in the program. But something needs to be done to press the public schools to be more respectful of Native Americans in this land.

- I am from the Cree community in Hobbema, Alberta, Canada, and I came seeking innovative approaches and ideas for combating the dropout situation we are facing at home. We seem to have better success at the adult education level, where we are providing incentives and subsidies for single parents and tribally sponsored day care for their kids. But the problem we have in the schools is very low attendance. We have tried to develop awards and incentives for students in grades kindergarten through 12. Slowly, slowly we are progressing but we would like to be progressing at a faster rate. We recognize those who maintain good attendance and those who do well academically and athletically. We get student's interest, but not the parents. Our biggest problem is not drugs or alcohol, it is the attitudes of our tribal members and the attitudes of school authorities. I come from a community where the Indian-white relationship is terrible. The non-Indian school where we send our children is in a redneck and racist community where students are always putting Indian students and the Indian community down. The general attitude is that Indians are dumb and lazy and can't learn. This sort of sets into an Indian child's thinking the notion that, "If I am dumb, if I'm an idiot, if I am lazy, I am not going to learn." So this is a big problem we face. Another problem we face, since our schools are operated by the federal government, is that we get a lot of teachers who can't find jobs in other jurisdictions. They come feeling that they don't have to be good since they are just going to be working in an Indian school and the kids are dumb already. The Indian community does not have adequate input with the schools to be able to impact this situation. We have no control over the teachers we get whether it is for our Indian school or for the white schools.

- The Phoenix Indian Center, which is a community-based organization, has encountered a lot of negative attitudes among school district staff toward any Native American specialist who comes in to the schools. This is because early on a lot of emphasis was in working with the students on cultural studies. The schools began to questions, what Indian education really was all about. So we found we were in a tough situation trying to satisfy both the Indian community and the non-Indian educational community. The district used to have 12 Native American specialists and now they only have two. Our project staff noticed that a lot of Indian students were falling through the cracks and that attendance rates were poor.

- When you run an alternative classroom, you really have to hang your ego on the door and walk in without it, because you have to give to those kids. A large part of our problem is we have teachers who are saying "you have to respect me" without working with these kids in a way that will generate that respect. You know, you can't demand respect.

Health and Wellness

- Health is a big consideration. Some students arrive at school hungry and cold, or both. The socioeconomic conditions in communities are devastating right now for our kids in school, and this is nothing new to our people.

- Student health is an important factor, yet some schools systems are cutting back on the number of school health nurses or transferring some of their responsibility to clerical support staff reportedly because of tight funding. The cost of delivering services becomes greater all the time and they have to look for places to cut. Like the federal government, they cut at the most vulnerable spots and frequently these are also where programs are most needed.

- Our district had one nurse serving two schools and then when they began to cut back, they expected the principals and secretaries to do the health work in emergencies. As a public health nurse, I do not see how these untrained people can take over the job of a school nurse. School nurses are trained to see with a third eye. For example, we had a little kindergarten girl whose eyes I tested and they were perfect the first year. Then next year I checked and one eye was off 20 points. Because she was little, I checked and rechecked to be sure she was understanding the directions, and still she did not pass. I called the parent in and advised her to have it checked and that little girl had an eye cancer. Her eye was enucleated and she is still alive today because we caught it early. So I feel that I saved her life. The same kind of thing happened with another little girl who had a sore knee and was on crutches for two weeks. She was seeing the doctors, but nothing was being done and there was no improvement. Finally she was diagnosed with a knee cancer and had to have her leg amputated. But she is alive today. How can anyone detect these kinds of things if they are untrained? When we eliminate trained school nurses, we are shortchanging our children. If children are not healthy, how can they study?

Historical Constraints on Parental Involvement

- As far as parental involvement is concerned, those of us who went to boarding school were never given any opportunity to maintain our child-parent relationship. We were given crew cuts, given uniforms, and marched to the cafeteria and to classes. The staff never had any parenting training, so we didn't get any of the love and hugs we needed. This has caused dysfunction in our communities. Add to that the substance abuse issues, and as things go on we don't have good parenting skills. Our children suffer from this, so where do we begin?

Dilapidated and Inadequate Facilities

- One of the characteristics of an effective school is that it creates a positive learning environment and school climate that supports the physical and mental health of the children. I am really questioning whether the Bureau of Indian Affairs and its subsidiaries are really interested in providing a positive environment as far as infrastructure is concerned. I know money is tight, but we seem to be faced with a process that is slowly bleeding most of the schools to death. If you look across Indian country you find that the buildings are in very poor state of maintenance. When a child comes into that kind of a situation, where even the heating and plumbing are inadequate, it is hard to have a positive environment. So I would like to know what will be the goals of the systems in terms of updating, remodeling, and/or providing new structures for Indian community schools.

- It seems the schools were built for a 20-year cycle. Those 20 years have passed and the buildings are old and dilapidated. A number of them were built on faults and they're sinking or they are unsafe.

- I am working with a BIA dormitory that can house 200 young people. This year we will have a very high dropout rate because evidently there was poor collaboration between the BIA and the group doing construction and renovation. It was supposed to be ready by October or November, and now we are told that it won't be completed until April or May. This means that many of our students have to commute 90 miles round trip. Several of them have been picked up and put in jail for alcohol problems before they even stepped on the bus to head back home. Several of our girls who would have been in the dormitory are pregnant. I'm just not sure how long they will stick with the long commute. I do not know who didn't coordinate this properly, but evidently it was put on an eleven-month construction schedule.

Contributing Problems at the Federal Level

- There is too much turnover of staff in the Office of Indian Education in Washington, DC. We need consistency of staff in order to get the support we need for success and in order to be kept abreast of what is going on throughout Indian country. The Office of Indian Education should also be accountable to Indian parents and Indian communities, in the same way that schools should be accountable. It is better now that we have a new Director but we need to keep it that way. We need to have strong communication between Washington, DC and the local level.

- As we try to address the dropout problem, it seems really difficult to say where to begin. I recall 1967, when Senator Robert Kennedy was in Flagstaff running these same kinds of hearings. The same kinds of comments were being raised. Those studies sat on someone's shelf for a number of years until finally someone wondered why they were gathering dust and decided to do something. Then we heard a little about the 560 local control. But in this local control, the funds did not come down the way they should have. A lot of our teachers did not have an opportunity to go on for further training, unlike the old Bureau system where they were allowed educational leave with pay.

- I have always believed in a holistic approach to education that focuses on the health and well-being of the students in addition to the academic part of schooling. But we are told we must work on "the nation at risk," and the bureaucratic system needs to know what is working and what isn't working. To determine this they look at test results and the academic achievement of students. What they don't look at is what it takes to get a student to achieve academically. Nevertheless, we continue to work on this area.

Other Contributing Factors

- There are a lot of reasons why students drop out that have nothing to do with schools. Some students become parents. Some can't go to school for other reasons.

- We work in a border town and serve students from the reservation and off the reservation. Some of them don't make it to school because they don't have the clothes, or they haven't had their physical exam because their parents couldn't bring them in from the reservation.

- At Fort Washakie in Wyoming, we have a very high dropout rate at our school, and I attribute this in part to all of the video cassette films that our students can pick up at groceries and video stores and take home to watch. These films often depict people going out and making a million bucks just by selling some kind of drugs. They give kids crazy ideas, and the impression that they don't have to go to school to have a good life. They just have to go out and meet up with some drug dealer and they can also make millions.

III. Programs and Strategies That Work

Influencing the System

- When our community finally was able to put a Native person on the school board, she discovered for the first time that they were supposed to hold a community hearing to determine how Impact Aid monies would be used. We realized that we were getting all of this money and it had never come into the community. When this became known there were all kinds of rumors and ideas floating around on the reservation about the use of the $100,000. But we realized that it could be used in any way the county sees fit and we are just there for input. So we hired someone to come in and serve as a liaison between the school and the parents, kids, and community. She has been there a couple of years and it is slowly working. So it is really a matter of having your community stand up and demand to have a voice in how this money will be spent. They don't have to take your advice, but if you speak as a community, there are ways of obtaining some of the needed programs and services.

- The differences between teaching styles and student learning styles are also important factors. Santa Barbara County, through the Superintendent of Schools, has a partnering relationship with Santa Barbara Community College entitled Tomorrow's Teacher Program. We are all in agreement that we want to find candidates for teaching who are committed and have a passion, so we need to find these young people. This can help many students stay in school, if they know that we are out looking for young people who are interested in teaching and have ideas. They know what works and what doesn't work. If we share the responsibility and allow students to own their own learning, teachers can become facilitators, helping students identify their needs and interests, allowing things to happen, and encouraging cooperative learning situations.

Early Intervention

- The Principal of Dilcon School on Navajo reported that her district was concerned about the at-risk students because they had found that, in a K through 8 school with 500 students, about one-third of the eighth graders were graduating with social promotions, meaning they did not meet academic standards. So this year we have established an alternative classroom where different approaches to teaching are used. We are currently re-doing the curriculum to provide adult level content at lower levels of reading ability. When we put students in resource or remedial classes, they get second and third grade content and that is why they are dropping out. We are very blunt with them about the situation. We tell them "you are failing and we are going to give you a chance to do something about it, but you are going to work in this classroom. You are a sixth grader, and if you work hard you can achieve sufficient academic growth in the next two years and we will graduate you." We do this to really challenge the kids. None of these kids qualify for Chapter 1, but all are at least two years behind grade level, and many have been retained sometime between kindergarten and sixth grade. They are the kids who have fallen through the cracks.

As an administrator you have to take a tough stand, because some teachers will tell you you are crazy and that you are labeling these kids. I tell them that just because they get students through the system with social promotions doesn't mean they are going to make it through high school. They are literally being trashed and they don't even have a chance at college. We have to give them a place where they can have a chance. We have to be flexible to really help these kids. Retaining them is not the answer. We are hoping our new program will provide a better solution. Of course, then you have to worry about what happens to them when they go on to high school.

- The Indian student dropout prevention program in Phoenix Union High School District consists primarily of early intervention by Native American counselors who work with eighth graders. They help them identify their interests, abilities, and career aspirations, and visit their homes in the summer and sit down with both the student and parents to share information about the high school academic program, what the requirements are, what they can and can't expect, and work out a four year plan with the student. This way they have a general guideline for the next four years if they wish to use it. At the same time, they gather a lot of information about the family and student which they can integrate into the record that is available when the student enters in the fall. This way the school knows whether or not students need financial assistance, free lunches, bus tokens, and all of the other little things that add up to big obstacles. Once the students are on campus, our counselors continue to offer them support. Out of a total of 20,000 students, Indian students make up 3.6 percent. When we started the program five years ago, we were operating with close to an annual 25 percent dropout rate, and now we are down to 17.3, so it has been fairly effective.

- At Little Big Horn Tribal Community College, faculty have been working with dropouts who are still in school. The students we focus on are still attending school but have dropped out of the math and science tracks altogether. We are interested in creating an environment where they can have lots of opportunity for discovery and for trial and error--in a laboratory situation, or on a nature exploration of a river bottom, grassland, or swampy area on the reservation. We take fifth and sixth graders in an ungraded science situation and involve them with at least one or two full-time scientists from our faculty and science students from our college. These people are often known to our students from the community. We let them try things out without the harshness of competing with each other for grades and without being judged, so they can just experience the joys of discovery in science and math. Hopefully they are encouraged to keep up their interest and sign up for some of the more difficult subjects when they get to seventh grade. We feel this is important, because if they drop out of science and math, they will be excluding themselves from as many as 40 percent of the career opportunities that will be available. We have seen from our college perspective so many students walk through our doors who need a full year or two of developmental education which they might not have needed if they had made better decisions in seventh grade. They end up wasting a whole year of financial aid just catching up, and even if they have the potential to learn science, they may run out of money by their junior year and then have to drop out of college. We have had this happen with 11 or 12 of our students, so we are trying to address it at the front end.

Improving Teacher and Staff Attitudes

- In our efforts to sensitize teachers to the needs of Native American students, it is important that we do not neglect the classified staff in the school district. The office secretaries, counseling secretaries, and the registrar can have a tremendous impact on Native students who are coming into the high school setting. For instance, they will often ask, "Where is your birth certificate? You know you've got to have a birth certificate. How come you didn't bring your birth certificate?" Now a white or black student might bristle at this and then dish it right back, but a lot of Indian students are going to back off and then leave and that will be the last time you see them. So it is important to work with those staff who are likely to be the first to see the student and family. I would like to see classified staff actually taken through the same process that students go through to register and have to meet the same requirements for documentation. You know we are often talking about a student coming from a school with 600 to 700 kids into a school with 2,000, and it is a big shock to them.

At the same time it is important to prepare students and parents by telling them that they are going to find these kinds of people at the high school and they may be grouchy and give you a hard time. This way they will know what to expect when they get there. In our Indian education program we try to cushion and buffer this process as best we can, but we can't be everywhere at once. If students know what to expect, it may be easier for them to take and they will be willing to put up with a little of it to stay in school.

Title V Dropout Prevention

- Title V is a must in the United States for all Indian students. It should be mandated for any school in the country that serves more than ten Indian students. These schools should each have parent advisory committees where Indian parents can voice their support and concerns about the public school as a whole. There are schools out there that are misusing their Title V and JOM funds. The money is supposed to be spent on Indian students and not to build a playground or fund other general school expenses. We need better accountability in these programs.

- Title V is working! One program in a public system with 10 percent Indian population indicated that the students it serves are maintaining an 86 percent attendance rate, an overall 2.2 grade point average, and a 90 percent graduation rate. We just need to be able to serve more students, and we need better district accountability for the use of funds.

- The Title V program in Grand Rapids, Michigan, has persuaded the school district to agree to a pilot demonstration program for their middle and high school students (grades 7 through 12). They found they were losing students in the seventh grade, and there were no alternative programs in the district to meet the needs of Indian students. Some of the problems in their urban district include the fact that the Indian population is so spread out that kids are not comfortable in the classrooms. They need a lot of individualized attention because of their low academic levels.

The pilot program is for students who are not attending any school. It started with about seven students in the Title V supervisor's office. By November they had official approval to go ahead with a program that combined the Indian Education program office and a classroom staffed by a certified Indian teacher. The teacher found that a lot of the kids can't read, can't write, and don't know their math. Some students in the class are functioning at second and third grade levels academically and others are at college level. The alternative classroom now has 25 Indian students.

When we talk to administrators and teachers in our district, they always tell us that there aren't enough dollars. Our Indian population is only about 2 percent of the district total, so we are the minority of the minorities and can't receive any priority attention. It has taken the Indian teacher about a year to even get some of these kids to come out of their shell to do work so that he can see where they are academically and begin working with them to increase their academic ability. These are the kind of kids whom nobody wanted in their classroom. Nobody wanted to deal with the multitude of problems in their personal and family life. So they were more or less pushed out of school, although the Grand Rapids administration would not like to hear that.

We have seen an 80 percent increase in student attendance and a 75 percent increase in academic ability especially with those for whom we had no previously complete record of testing. They either wouldn't take the tests, or wouldn't show up, or would have the pretests but no posttests. At this point we feel that the district should listen to Indian people and not be afraid to let Indian people run programs, because Indian kids work better with Indian people. These kids need people who are going to care about them and be supportive.

The Title V program in Santa Fe Public Schools works with a small minority of the overall district student population, but the Native American dropout rate is disproportionately high. Despite this, the district administration does not want to look at the problem. There is no attitude there that supports working to improve the situation.

So the Title V program is doing its best to address the problems with very limited amounts of funding and staff. This year and last year we have been working with high school students who are identified as "at risk." We are targeting between 20 and 30 students who have truancy problems and all of the other at risk factors. Last year we had a support person who worked with them primarily on social integration. Many of the problems they addressed were related to helping students learn to deal with teachers, helping them realize that teachers are human and have hearts and can be approached for assistance. We found that most of these kids really want to be part of the school, and we asked them how they would get involved if their GPAs were up to par. A lot of them said they would get involved in sports and clubs, but they just don't know how to do it.

Focusing on Attendance, Truancy, and Academic Services

I have four Indian staff members who assist me in our program, which serves about 950 students in our district. We have been working on the attendance issue and our dropout problem. Six years ago we had a 10 percent absentee rate, and now we have that down to around two percent. We have worked with the truant officer to catch attendance problems immediately. If she is unable to locate the family or determine why the student is absent she immediately informs our Title V office. Since we know the aunts and uncles and cousins, we can probably contact them and find out where this student is. So they know we are going to be looking for them. After awhile, they get so that they don't want us looking for them, so they come back to school. Personal letters have also helped. If our students have perfect attendance at the end of the first semester, they get a letter signed by all of the staff in the office. This has been interesting, because now each semester young people come in and say, "Oh, I didn't get my letter yet. Have you checked my attendance yet?" So this has been a help. We also send home congratulatory letters for each of our students who make the honor roll.

At the end of the school year, we also have a potluck supper and award certificates to those young people who have only missed school perhaps one to four days. That has been a terrific incentive because they feel specially honored and we give a small prize to them like a gift certificate to Arby's or McDonald's. So the outside community is helping us with this also.

We also try to work with junior high and high school students to find out why they might not want to finish school. Some of them said, "Well, what's the use, because there's nothing to come back to...we don't want to go to Phoenix or to work in Los Angeles or Albuquerque...we want to stay close to home." So we have taken several steps. A few years ago we invited tribal members from the Department of Economic Development of each of the four tribes to come in and describe their five-year plans. This gave our young people and their parents an idea of what to prepare for, so they had better incentive. They know that there will be jobs in health, fire and police services, and so forth, so this gives them a better idea of why they should finish school. We also have brought in different Indian professionals to provide role models for kids. They can speak from personal experience about what it is possible to achieve. We do this at monthly brown bag lunches where the kids tell us what areas they are interested in and we find speakers so they can come and listen and ask questions. We may only have eight to ten show up each month, but their horizons are expanded. Over the past five years we have found that everyone who attended some of these luncheons has gone on to community college or a four-year college after graduation.

Another strategy that has worked very well for us is to take those who have been very successful in school on an award trip. Parents have recommended that students must be on the honor roll for at least two semesters, and then we take them on a two-day expense-paid vacation during spring break. This trip has to include instruction in something that is going on in the state or make them aware of another tribe in the state. We started out with seven young people qualifying. The second year we had 15 that were eligible and each year after that it has gone up to 21, 28, and 32. One year we had 14 students in the National Honor Society, so this has really helped them.

Another strategy we use with parents, in order to make them more aware of their own needs for education, is that we promise to buy lunch for anyone who gets their GED and a dinner for anyone who gets an associates of arts degree. This is funded through extra projects from our parents group and not from Title V funds.

When students drop out, we follow up with personal consultations and letters saying what their alternatives might be, especially if they are over 18.

Our tribe is near the Nevada border and we have tried several strategies to combat the dropout situation. First, we established our own school district within the county, so we basically have a Native American representative on the governmental board of the county. Working with the tribal government and the local community government, we were able to place our own Native American member on the County Board of Education. Then we have taken Impact Aid monies that the school receives and hired an Indian liaison who works with parents, the school, and children who have truancy and attendance problems.

Being on the border makes things very difficult because it is not always clear who is responsible for the kids. In the elementary school we have 50 percent Native American students. When they reach the high school, they are shipped across into Nevada for school. They go from an elementary school of 120 to a high school of 2500, and we lose them at the ninth grade. So our tribe has passed a resolution to set money aside to fund an incentive program for these kids, to encourage them to finish school with a certain grade point average. For instance, we may give a freshman who finishes ninth grade $100. He or she can take it and run or go on to become a sophomore. We will double the amount up to the senior year.

At the same time we will have our liaison smothering students with information about the importance of higher education. Since we have begun these programs we have seen an improvement in enrollment and a reduction in truancy with these kids.

As an attorney, I have had occasion to deal with expulsion hearings, where an Indian child is at the bottom of the barrel and everything is failing. Very often there are significant disciplinary problems and there are major academic deficiencies for that child. There are also problems with relevance and the young person wonders, "What does this institution have to offer me?" It can actually be very relevant, if we can step back and say, "Look, this is a game that we play, this system is a game and you can have a positive interaction without feeling that it is a reflection on your culture or your people." I have found that this approach empowers the child. It also empowers the family, by giving them a new perspective, that it isn't necessary to reject everything because there are conflicts.

Teen Parenting Programs

The Phoenix District has two programs for young women with babies, and in both cases we work with the Phoenix Indian Center by having them refer students to us that they know are out in the community and not attending school because of pregnancy. On the basis of referrals, we are able to register eligible students in these programs, where they are required to take a child development course, or they are matched up with their regular high school program, wherever they left off. We also offer counseling for the students in terms of what happens after the baby is born. It is our experience that being pregnant is less likely to keep a young mother out of school than what happens after the baby arrives. They usually think that "Grandma, Mom, or Auntie is going to take care of the baby." Well, Auntie takes care of the baby until the first opportunity for employment comes along, and then the mother is out of school again. So we help young mothers access social services for help with child care in the local community. We have had fair success with that approach.

Community and Business Partnerships

The Phoenix Indian Center conducted a needs assessment that covered the greater metropolitan area including Phoenix, Mesa, Scottsdale, and Tempe. We looked at the private sector's hiring practices and entry level requirements. We also looked at other community-based minority organizations that serve Chicanos and Blacks to compare our ability to reach our clients. On the basis of this information, we designed a leadership project that would be based on a partnership, linking all of these people together.

We started working with schools four years ago to help bring the dropout rate down. Our partners include corporations such as U.S. West, Digital, and Motorola; the governor's office; and local city governments, all of whom are willing to provide in-kind contributions for our kids, at the same time that we encourage them to consider multi-cultural diversity in their working environments.

We now are serving younger brothers and sisters of older students who have been in our programs and graduated. In some families we are working with kids at three different grade levels. We have parents who are really committed, and the whole family is involved in our organization. We believe that motivation and creativity are just as important as receiving additional money from the federal government. Even rural areas can establish good programs in partnerships with other organizations. The key ingredient is motivated and inspired staff. We need to go beyond traditional program boundaries and start looking at how we can take care of one another.

We have quarterly networking sessions where we bring in key decisionmakers from the schools, businesses and community-based organizations and we talk about the ways we can continue to work together without taking over any of the school district's responsibilities. This is especially important, since we have no guarantee that our program will be around next year.

In our in-school program, we work with 193 kids. Our afterschool project serves anywhere from 25 to 50 kids and many of their parents. We also have a partnership with the Arizona state universities and their special Indian projects (the Center for Indian Education, American Indian Institute, and the American Indian Law and Minority Counseling Program). We co-sponsor two conferences each year where we bring in about 150 kids for sessions on the university campus. We try to get the universities more involved; we now are included in the budget for undergraduate admissions at ASU, so they are now starting to contribute funds as well as professional time.

Employability Strategies

- In any program working with potential dropouts at any grade level, there is a need to present students with some perspective of what is going on in the educational system and how that relates to their communities. This will give them a better sense of the relevance of their own experience.

- Our program is on a 12-month cycle. During the first nine months, we work with the school system itself, providing activities to help maintain students' interest in school. Then in the summer out of a total of 190 students we work with about 52 who are selected to participate in a World of Work shadowing program. When they are selected, we have them identify career goals and then they spend part of the summer in a mentoring situation. As part of the training, before we assign them to job sites, we deliver a 64-hour World of Work seminar at a nearby community college. Part of the curriculum involves their doing research in the careers that interest them, and part of it is focused on employability skills and effective communications. We use computers and word processing to increase their computer literacy. We also teach them peer and self-evaluation skills. When they go out for a mentoring placement, they have to develop a resume and interview with their mentor. This is one strategy that has worked to help keep our kids in school during the five years that begin with eighth grade.

- People talk about getting more Indians involved in math and science and into laboratory situations, and yet most of the labs are not in Indian communities. So if you succeed in this course of study, you may end up cutting yourself off from your tribe and your people. It doesn't have to be that way, if children can learn that these are useful tools and there are many possible ways of employing them in tribal communities as well, but you don't very often hear that approach.

Increasing Parent Support

- A lot of dropouts, perhaps 70 percent, come from families of dropouts, where their brothers and sisters and maybe even their parents were also dropouts. One year in our GED program we graduated two mothers and their daughters, which was really outstanding for them. But we feel that there is promise in establishing family literacy programs, where the total family comes in together to work on reading and writing. They discover that learning is fun, and it is fun to go to the library. This works in a positive way on both the children's and the parents' self-esteem and their attitude toward schooling and education.

Adult Education

- I work with the BIA Adult Education Program in Fort Defiance Navajo. I have been in education for 15 to 20 years and have taught in the lower elementary grades prior to going into adult education. I have found that schools really need to concentrate on educating parents and then on trying to keep the students in school. We are close to the borderline of a public school district, and a lot of the public schools take our students away. We try to keep them at the BIA school, because we have a lot of teachers who are Navajo and speak the Native language and we feel they do a better job of teaching our own children and giving them a sense of self-esteem. In contrast, in the public schools your Indian heritage and the history of your people doesn't really make a difference. They learn the history of the United States, but they don't know how that is different from the history of their people. Many of these kids don't even know who their tribal representatives are. At the tribal school we also work with a lot of students, especially eighth graders, who are over-age. We served 15 of these students last year in our Adult Education program. However, many of our teachers, including myself, only work part time, so this is a problem.

IV. Recommendations

Influencing the System

- In our district 15 percent of the student population is Indian. All we have been hearing lately is about cuts to funding for JOM and Title V. We need to keep that money coming and we could use more of it so we can have enough counselors to really help our Native American students. We have found that our counselors can help our students stay in school, so we need to provide their services. The regular high school counselors are so busy with scheduling classes and other responsibilities that they do not help our Indian students. We need more counselors for our students at all levels, Kindergarten through 12, because the little guys need support too.

- Teachers who work with Indian students on or near a reservation should be required to take classes in the Indian culture and history of the area for recertification.

- All of us--families, communities, tribal governments, state and federal governments--have a responsibility and obligation to provide some of the possible solutions to this problem. For example, if tribes established educational goals--say that everyone would read at ninth grade level--then perhaps the schools would respond. If the social service providers in our community developed safe houses for our children who are abused and are afraid to go home at night, perhaps they would not be on the streets. If we had alternative schools within our high schools where students could study for their GED or where alternative approaches were used, perhaps students would stay in school.

- Many states, like Arizona and Wyoming, have laws that if a student misses ten or more days of school, he or she is dropped from the rolls. There should be a mandated hearing that includes teachers, the administrator, and the family as a whole before students are dropped and when they come back into school.

- Educational leaders and tribal leaders have within their possession the mechanisms whereby they can restructure the educational systems. On a fundamental level, our education needs to be established on a foundation of our culture, our language, and self-esteem, as well as a system where students are involved in decisionmaking.

- These at-risk students can learn, contrary to what many seem to believe. They also want to learn. We need to implement alternative ways of teaching and alternate ways of measuring student performance. Standardized testing is not the only way to do this.

- One program director in a public school system with 25 percent Native enrollment has taken on the task of increasing cultural understanding and awareness by volunteering to share introductions to Indian culture at inservices, classroom workshops, different civic organization meetings, and with any other group that has an interest. This seems to help get rid of some of the stereotypes in the community.

- It would be interesting to advance the concept that Impact Aid is really in a sense tribal taxation dollars, since it is provided in lieu of tax-exempt status for land. This way a tribe might have greater influence on expenditure of this money.

Early Intervention

- We need students to discover who they are early in elementary school. They need to discover what their interests and strengths are and what areas they need to work hard on, so that students can own their own learning. They should be allowed to select their own projects within a given subject, so that their work will hold their attention and develop their concentration. We also must accept a student's communication first as it is spoken, allowing an integrated speaking and writing approach, so that formal written language can be successfully acquired later. We should be giving grades on the basis of process as well as product. I graduated in 1958 with my elementary certificate from a Ford Foundation-sponsored program with the City of San Francisco. The focus of that credentialing program is what we are still looking for today. These programs should encourage teachers to ask what individual students need in order to take charge of their own learning. The programs should enable teachers to offer a balance of affective and cognitive learning and utilize different instructional strategies such as cooperative learning groups, and learning by doing, imagining, and experiencing.

The Importance of Administrative and Teacher Support

- To bring about structural change, you have to have people who want change and want it to begin with them, not the students. This includes teachers, administrators, cooks, drivers, and secretaries. Everyone has to put themselves on the line to learn a completely new approach. When you are working with students at risk, it means a complete and totally different perception from the way we were trained in the university. You have to have staff who are willing to get involved with students and meet their social as well as emotional needs, because if this is not done, where will these students gain their self-confidence and their strength to face something that is new?

- I cannot stress enough the importance of having an administrator who is willing to do something about a situation. This is where change must start in your local school. If administrative and staff support is not in place, parental involvement is not going to happen. You will not be able to sell the students on the idea that they can learn, that you have something to offer them, that you have a challenge for them. They won't accept this until the staff earns the students' respect.

- We also have to figure out what to do with the bureaucracy. When you want to establish a school program to help these kids achieve, you still have to have the support of a superintendent who knows what is happening. You also have to consider what you are going to do with the state and district regulations that are inflexible and restrict what you are able to do for these kids. You have to have a bureaucracy and a policy environment that allow you to provide the kinds of programs and services needed.

- When our tutors provide one-on-one support to an elementary school child, they are aware of the family, the background, and the history. That is why it is important that Indian people work with Indian children. So many of us are related by community or by blood, there is much less resistance from the family and the child that you are trying to work with, especially on sensitive issues like substance abuse, physical abuse, or neglect.

- Red Lake Public School District in Minnesota has embarked on a long-range plan to work with the school district to address the problem of overage students dropping out. They have developed a list of effective characteristics for a Red Lake teacher on the basis of student input. They then developed job descriptions on this basis and have begun to supervise teachers accordingly. The comments about racism are true there also, but it is interesting what kids will say about teachers they like: "He talks to me, he's fair, he challenges me."

- According to findings of the Navajo Dropout Study it is important that dropout prevention programs pay attention to what is going on in the classroom and to the quality of teachers. Students told us again and again that what is important about good teachers and good teaching and learning experiences is that teachers are fair, consistent, respect students, respect their culture and their language, don't underestimate them, and really care about them. They rated high those teachers who can provide a challenging and interesting kind of curriculum for students. These are things we can do something about; and many of the solutions are just plain common sense.

- I think all of our students are special and gifted and worth recognizing. They are not getting this in school. If you are special, you can learn all of these other things. So we need to have teachers with creativity and vision, and they must also have the dedication and determination to make things work. The bottom line is not funding, it is your staff, your accountability, and your determination.

- In terms of getting more Indian teachers, our district is working with AHEC and our tribally controlled colleges, but it is going to take time. So we need to educate our non-Indian teachers about the culture and traditions and the low self-esteem that Indian people have, so that they can relate to and effectively teach our children.

The Role of Parents

- Parents have a role to play in dropout prevention, especially as advocates for their child's education. Sometimes parents have to make a choice between living in an urban setting where you may lose touch with your language and culture. These are hard choices, but to me it is important that parents maintain their sense of direction. When you do have your culture and your language, it is a big plus and something you can resort back to. But my two children are going to a prep school, by my choice, so they will be prepared for a better life. As parents we do have a choice of preventing our children from dropping out by saying, "Hey, this is the direction I want you to take." Most children are looking for direction from their Elders, from family, teachers, counselors, and other adults.

- Parents who participate in our schools, who come to parent-teacher conferences, who come to basketball games and music concerts, who support all of the extracurricular activities that their children participate in, generally do not have children who are at risk. The parents of at-risk children are those we do not see in the schools. They are usually involved in so many other things and issues of their own that they do not have time to come to school. Other life issues make it hard for them to support education. I believe we need to provide parenting skills and programs to increase parental involvement for at-risk children. When parents are not available, we need to work with whoever is key in that child's life, whether it is the grandmother or grandfather, the sister or brother, aunt or uncle.

- In Santa Barbara County it seems easier for parents to be involved and supportive of their children when they are young. We encourage a networking support for parents, so they will not give up on supporting their children. The PTA is involved, we also involve retired people in the community, and we are setting up a partnership with the community. This allows us to find sponsors for activities like an Indian Club, even if there is no one in the school who can serve as a faculty advisor. This takes time, but eventually you can find people who are interested.

Teen Parenting & Drug and Alcohol Programs

- We need to provide day care and young mother programs in our schools, and we need to continue to provide a lot of drug and alcohol education programs. We have provided some of these over the past few years, but they need to be strengthened. The drug and alcohol issue alone is a major one in many of our communities and we need to work on it to reduce abuse on the reservations.

Quality Vocational Education as an Option

- Last week I attended a meeting in Portland, OR, for educators from around the Northwest and the Pacific, entitled "Can minorities and low income students be taught?" The meeting focused on ways to address the dropout problem. Everyone answered the title question with a "yes." In seeking answers to the problems one of the ideas that came up was offering vocational education as an option that could take the place of programs with a primary focus on academics. Vocational education is a little more attractive than it was a few years ago. It now includes high technology offerings like office skills, computers, and so forth. So for students who are sick and tired of books, it is not a bad option to give them something they can do with their hands.

- The BIA ran vocational programs in the past, and some of the tribes will be contracting to run AVT programs. When the Bureau ran these programs, it did not administer them correctly and there were a lot of funds that never reached our people. Tribal contractors will be more concerned and better able to use those funds to the advantage of Indian students.

- I have recently funded two students to the International Air Academy in Vancouver, WA. You all realize that the largest corporations are mandated to hire a certain number of minorities. So one of these students was hired by United Airlines in Seattle, and the other was hired by American Airlines right after graduation. So we should be looking more into vocational training programs.

Development of State and National Databases

- Indian country needs to develop a good database of children who are at risk. We also need to have a more universal definition of who these children are. Different districts have different definitions of who is a dropout, and so do states. To realistically provide services, we have to have some kind of criteria to go by, so this type of database is really important.

- We need to have access to better information about programs that work and different approaches and strategies that are successful, so we aren't each operating in isolation using only our own theories about what might be effective.

INAR/NACIE Joint Issues Sessions
NIEA 22nd Annual Conference - San Diego, California
October 15, 1990

"Teacher and Administrator Training, Recruitment and Retention"

INAR/NACIE Joint Issue Sessions
NIEA 22nd Annual Conference - San Diego, California
October 15, 1990

Summary: "Teacher and Administrator Training, Recruitment, and Retention"

The first session on teacher and administrator training, recruitment, and retention was co-hosted by INAR Task Force member Joseph Ely and NACIE Council member Buck Martin. The second session on these issues was co-hosted by INAR Task Force member Janine Pease-Windy Boy and NACIE Council member Gloria Duus. The following issues, recommendations, and exemplary programs were discussed:

I. Recruitment for Teacher Training

Issues and Problems

- Raised admission standards and stringent requirements for entering teacher training programs make it more difficult for Native Americans to enter such programs. For example, Oregon is moving to a fifth-year program whereby teacher education candidates have to have a bachelors degree in a content area before they can enter teacher training programs.

- Required admission tests may also limit the number of Native Americans entering the field due to a language and cultural bias in the tests. On the Crow Reservation, 17 people have taken the National Teachers' Examination (NTE) and only two have passed. The other 15 candidates performed well in their college courses but were unable to pass the NTE because of their bilingualism.

- Competition between college majors means that many students are choosing to pursue professions other than teaching because teachers are paid less and have less stature in society. Current Native American teachers need to demonstrate through modeling that teaching is a real, viable, and important profession.

- Financial and other resources for teacher training programs are often wasted on people who do not return to the reservation.

- Attracting Native American people into teacher training programs is difficult due to several reasons: (1) Many Native American students drop out of high schools--particularly in urban areas--and prospective candidates are lost at an early age; (2) Many Native Americans do not have an enrollment number and thus are not eligible for needed scholarships.

- Many institutions are not willing to discuss who is or is not Indian and thus are granting Indian opportunities to non-Indians with falsified documents. Because many Indian students are not enrolled in a tribe, proof of Native American identity should be based on documentation of heritage.

Recommendations

- States should re-evaluate and reconsider teacher testing policies.

- Funding for higher education could serve as an incentive to encourage Native Americans to enter teacher training programs. More scholarship money should be made available, especially for the adult learner who is committed to bringing services back to the reservation.

- To encourage greater participation in teacher training programs, colleges could bring courses to students on the reservation.

- Active outreach by colleges is needed to attract Native Americans from urban areas.

Recruitment Programs that Work

- Prescott College in Prescott, Arizona has a center for bilingual teacher training financed by the Fund for Improvement for Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) under the U.S. Department of Education and also Title VII education, personnel, and training. Their pilot program, that began in the Tohono O'Odham Nation in 1985, targets teacher aides with two years of college. Most of these aides are adult women who have been working in the schools for 15 years.

- In Alaska, a Native Alaskan teacher caucus was established to share insights about the teaching profession with different communities. Furthermore, the state university system has a village and urban Excel program to promote Native educators.

II. Teacher Training Retention

Issues and Problems

- Sufficient financial aid is difficult to obtain, especially for students who are required to complete a fifth year of study.

- Racism on campus discourages current students. For example, at the University of Minnesota-Duluth, a required course on human diversity focuses on the strengths of other minority groups but ignores the important issues of Native Americans. The course paints a very tainted picture of Native American people by focusing only on alcoholism and ignoring issues such as treaty rights. Courses such as these need to present a more balanced picture of Indians. University faculty should make a bona fide attempt to deal with racism in the curriculum and the institution and to educate people about racism.

Recommendations

- Counseling and support services are needed to encourage students to persist in teacher training programs. An established connection between high school and college could help promote college persistence.

- Agreements need to be articulated between community colleges and four-year institutions so students can transfer without losing credits. Currently, students who transfer from community colleges to universities lose two-thirds of their credit hours. Additionally, a provision should be made for reciprocal certification requirements between states. Both of these agreements will broaden the base of teachers from which to draw and will lessen the burden on students.

Retention Programs that Work

- The Kahnawake Reserve of the Mohawk Nation in Canada has established a partnership with McGill University to create a teacher training program called "Certificate in Native and Northern Education." This and similar programs in the Province of Quebec fall under the First Nation's Education Council and are federally-funded by the Department of Indian Affairs. This is a grassroots program in which professors come to the community to teach courses. Teachers serve as aides in the schools while taking courses on weekends and in the evenings. Administrators are trained on the job and are provided academic leave at a later time to complete their degrees.

- One Northwest affiliated tribe passed a resolution to create a task force to oversee some of the discrimination on campuses and public institutions that their tribal members attend.

III. Teacher Training Programs

Recommendations

- Teachers should be encouraged, or even required, to take courses with a multicultural emphasis to enable them to understand different cultures and to learn to deal with racism in their classrooms and schools. There is currently an effort by a Native American professor at the University of Oregon to develop a new teacher training program that is strongly multiculturally based. Individuals who have experienced multicultural courses develop a strong foundation in issues surrounding racism and stereotyping.

- For teachers intending to work on reservations, states should mandate a course specifically on Indian culture. There are currently at least four states that have Indian studies requirements for teachers, but the courses need to be examined and refined.

- Teacher training programs should include internships at the undergraduate level to show district personnel offices that we do have Native Americans in college who are training to become teachers.

- College students who are training to be teachers should be assigned to Title V programs as tutors to begin to understand the students, their needs, and the skills needed to reach those students.

- Research opportunities and scholarships for academic research need to be available for Native American graduate students.

IV. Inservice Training

Issues and Problems

- Continued training in schools through inservice programs is restricted because schools--especially small schools--are limited in what training they can offer their staff.

Recommendations

- New teachers should be familiar with the local culture. As part of training, experienced teachers could be matched with new teachers to introduce them to the local area and culture.

- Inservice training is an important aspect of continued teacher training for all staff, including experienced teachers and tutors. Schools must offer programs of substance with documentation and evaluation. In Juneau, Indian education staff are involved in creating inservice programs for their schools.

- Often administrators are afraid of losing non-Indian teachers by requiring inservice training, and thus these teachers may not learn about racism and cultural insensitivity. Consequently, often those teachers who most need inservice training do not attend. Programs to promote cultural sensitivity should be required of all teachers.

V. Teacher Recruitment

Issues and Problems

- Small, rural districts with limited financial resources cannot conduct on-site recruitment and often interview and hire school staff over the telephone. This presents a problem for both the schools and the teachers: schools are uncertain as to whom they are hiring, and teachers are uncertain as to whom they will be working for.

- Currently there is no centralized place to find qualified Native American or Alaskan Native teachers. Schools have to spend several hundred dollars in advertising and calling universities where there are high concentrations of Native American students.

Recommendations

- The establishment of a Native American teacher clearinghouse would help schools looking to fill positions.

- Districts can attract certified teachers by providing a commitment to hire students upon completion of their certification requirements.

VI. Teacher Retention

Issues and Problems

- In some districts, the closest teachers live 50 miles away from the school. This discourages teachers because transportation is expensive and no reimbursement is provided by the schools. This is particularly a problem for non-tribal members who are not able to move into HUD homes on the reservations without receiving waivers and completing other paperwork.

- Visits by the Office of Indian Education Programs (OIEP) are often negative and demoralizing to school staff because OIEP staff do not understand the situation of the school. OIEP staff are critical of the academic achievement of students, basing their assessment on standardized tests that do not consider certain strengths of the students such as cultural and language backgrounds. It is very difficult to keep morale high under these circumstances.

- Tribal schools are unable to retain qualified teachers because the BIA does not provide Bureau-funded schools with retirement systems. Often teachers looking for higher pay and retirement programs leave to work for public schools.

- It is difficult for tribal schools to recruit and retain qualified teachers when they are held hostage to the federal budget. One school in Idaho reported a significant increase in student population while being threatened with a 35% budget cutback. Furthermore, Bureau schools start out at a greater disadvantage, receiving less money per student than public schools. Idaho ranked 48th or 49th in their funding of public education, and the Bureau schools received $400 less per student than Idaho public schools.

- Poor educational facilities discourage teachers from accepting or retaining jobs in some schools because the public schools offer better facilities.

- Teachers in tribal schools often have more responsibilities than teachers in public schools. In public schools, teachers start their work at 8:00, prepare for the day, and leave at 3:30 after correcting their papers. In BIA schools, the teachers get up at 6:00 to drive the school busses, teach their classes, and then remain to lead extra-curricular activities. On the weekends they are called to drive the busses to football games or perform other such duties.

- Teachers unfamiliar with the school and community often face culture shock and leave a school within a year.

Recommendations

- Compensation or arrangements such as free carpools or vans should be provided for teachers living far away from the schools.

- A nation-wide retirement system should be established to allow teachers to transfer anywhere within the Bureau system. However, a few bugs need to be worked out before the federal government should be put in charge of a retirement plan because people in other federal areas have lost their retirements due to changing regulations.

- Teachers need access to resources so they feel prepared to perform their jobs. A network or a center for materials in each state could be established. Great Falls Public Schools in Montana has a very diversified and comprehensive learning resource center that could serve as a model for other such centers.

- Schools should question prospective teachers about their commitment to Native American students and their willingness to live and participate in the community to ensure they are hiring teachers who will continue to work in the school.

- Grant money should be available for effective, established retention programs.

Programs and Strategies that Work

- The American Indian Education Commission of the Los Angeles Unified School District is accepted by the school district and recognized directly under the Board of Education. Thus, Native American teachers have a voice in the school district. Each school district could organize a similar commission of Native American teachers.

- The Navajo Community College in Tsaili, Arizona takes teachers on tours to familiarize them with the Navajo people. They brought teachers to into Canyon de Chelly to give them a first-hand experience of what the Navajo people have gone through to survive, and plan on bringing them to Farmington, New Mexico where the Navajo people supposedly originated. These experiences should help decrease the culture shock often felt by teachers.

- The Four Winds Tribal School has negotiated a contract with the U.S. Department of Education to provide financial incentives to those teachers who have 50% of their students with academic achievement at grade level.

- A public school in New Mexico established a training and retention program and a support group with P.L. 874 funds. The program provides a cultural orientation for every new teacher in the district and allows them to meet once a month with an experienced teacher. In conjunction with the University of New Mexico, the program brought in different cultural activities, classroom activities, and computer training. Furthermore, they provided basic support helping teachers find laundromats, grocery stores, and other such places. The district used P.L. 874 funds to pay for substitute teachers on training or meeting days.

VII. Administrator Retention

Problems

- Administrators, especially in small, rural areas, are often overwhelmed with added duties such as driving busses, fixing toilets, and cooking breakfast. Principals are told the importance of being an effective leader in the classroom, but in small areas there are no secretaries or clerks and thus the principals are inundated with many tasks and reports.

- Schools that employ the Department of Defense pay scale pay higher salaries to teachers and counselors than to administrators because the pay scale does not apply to administrators. This unbalanced salary rate serves as a disincentive for administrators.

- Administrators, like teachers, experience culture shock in unfamiliar communities.

Recommendations

- Additional compensation is needed to motivate administrators.

- "Leadership in Tribal Colleges," an AHEC program, is a good program for training and retaining people in administrative jobs.

VIII. Title V Staff

Issues and Problems

- Political pressures are sometimes put on Title V staff who do not conform to the politics of the school administration. There is a conflict between the administration's objectives and Title V staff evaluation of the needs of the students. Eventually these staff members either leave the system or conform to the administration.

- In urban schools, Title V is often the only program that serves as an advocate for the students and family; provides general basic skills, tutoring, or remediation for students that don't fall under other categorical programs; provides cultural instruction and counseling; and institutes staff development and curriculum development to make classroom environments more positive for Native American students. It is because of all these functions that Title V staff are under so much stress.

Recommendations

- Indian education programs need their own administrations with staff who are sensitive to the students' needs.

IX. Other Issues

Dropout Prevention

- Students receive their endowment or allotment of funds when they reach 18 years of age. Upon receipt of this money, many students drop out of high school. In a few years when the money is gone they come back to work towards their GED, a degree that has become so watered-down it is barely valid to the real world. As an incentive to graduate from high school, students should not receive any endowment until after they successfully complete their high school graduation requirements.

- Delinquent students should have a place to report in the evenings where live-in staff provide a structure, enforce rules, and help these students complete high school.

- Staff of boarding schools can help students persist in school by serving as surrogate parents and providing a secure place within a structure for the students to function.

Health, Wellness, Substance Abuse Prevention

- We need to solve problems of student alcohol and drug addiction by providing adequate counseling, treatment, and role models.

Standardized Testing

- Standardized tests are inadequate as measures of student growth. Native American students probably progress more quickly than the majority of society's students in English language skills and other standard American middle-class achievement considering they start below white children. Native American students do well in school even though their achievement scores may show them one or two years behind other children. It is necessary that we develop tests that are not solely dependent upon academic achievement.

Racism

- Students face blatant racism in their classes. In one district in Northwest Washington, high school students were required to take a class in Pacific Northwest history. Because teachers could use supplementary materials that did not have to be reviewed by a curriculum board, some teachers were using materials that were extremely racist and sexist. One unit called "Mountain Men and Their Women" talked about Indian fathers selling their daughters in rendezvous with the mountain men in return for a new rifle or a horse. The young girls supposedly agreed to this because of their low status as women. The students in this class were required to give corresponding answers on tests despite the inaccuracies and bias of the lessons. Similarly, one teacher showed a movie and clapped every time an Indian got killed.

- Schools should review curriculum materials to ensure they are not racist or offensive to Native American teachers or students.

Other

- "Workforce 2000" does not include Indians and thus policies are being made about the work force, higher education, vocational-technical, and two-year institutions without the input of Indians.

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"Health, Wellness, and Substance Abuse Prevention"

INAR/NACIE - Joint Issues Sessions
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October 15, 1990

Summary: "Health, Wellness, and Substance Abuse Prevention"

The first session on Health, Wellness, and Substance Abuse Prevention was co-hosted by INAR Task Force member David L. Beaulieu and NACIE Council member Andrea Barlow. The second session on these issues was co-hosted by INAR Task Force member Bob Martin and NACIE Council member Marie Cox. The following issues, recommendations and exemplary programs were discussed:

I. General Health and Wellness

Recommendations

- Every Indian nation must assume control over its own education systems. Then tribal people can institute culturally-relevant programs on a K through 12 basis that address substance abuse and other health issues, and actually hope to see tangible results within a generation.

- We do a disservice to our people when we always stress the families that are dysfunctional and abuse alcohol. We need to also give credit to those families who do raise their children well and are providing support for their education and personal growth.

- Children and youth are not receptive to educators' messages about health and substance abuse prevention when they get conflicting and contrary images from TV, advertising, and the adult behavior they see in their communities. Arguments that try to instill fear of health jeopardy as the consequences of drug and alcohol use, simply do not work. We need to speak to the issues that are most important to the kids we work with. Teens are mostly anxious about being unacceptable or unattractive so we must focus our messages on these issues.

- When non-Indian school personnel are trying to deliver health services to teens and encounter cultural barriers, they are advised to seek assistance through Indian Health Service community health representatives who know the culture and language of the youth and family being served.

- Some Indian people with unhealthy ways of thinking (many are alcoholics themselves) try to hide behind "traditional ways," when we introduce programs to address problems like children of alcoholics or physical abuse. We have to be clear about the real meaning of traditional ways and values versus unhealthy responses to life problems.

- Some tribes use public ridicule as a way of influencing people who have serious problems. In majority society this is considered uncourteous, but is it better to call in the police and hope they can find evidence which might put the offender in jail? The traditional approach is founded in the belief that you sometimes have to put people down before you can lift them up and this is seen by tribal members as a more effective solution.

- There are sometimes differences between Native traditional approaches to counseling and what is viewed as good practice by the majority culture. For instance, majority culture stresses giving praise while traditional culture assumes that people know when they are doing well and need to be advised only about the things they still need to learn.

- Because there are so many health related problems, whether you work on the reservation or in an urban setting, it is essential to draw on all of the available resources--parents, teachers, social service workers, clinic services, and tribal medicine people--in order to have a meaningful impact. It is especially important to have a networking system that includes those who know and understand the ways of indigenous people in the area you serve. Traditional medicine is a teaching mechanism and it needs to be available as a choice.

Programs and Strategies that Work

- Window Rock High School in Arizona has selected and trained teachers to conduct small group peer counseling sessions on a weekly basis for students who want to discuss issues of personal importance. Staff training includes coverage of issues such as substance abuse prevention, working with children of alcoholics, and suicide prevention. Sessions take place during the regular school day so students are excused from class and teachers each use their prep period one day a week to facilitate. When things come up that are beyond the skill of the teacher-facilitator, they can make referrals to local social services. Wherever possible, family-based problems are addressed through social service-based family counseling. This has been so successful that soon almost all teachers in the high school will have been trained to conduct these counseling groups.

- Claremore, OK, has organized a Running Club and gathers Indians students together 2 or 3 times a week for practice, and on Saturday mornings to participate in runs held throughout Oklahoma. This program was originally connected to the Indian Health Care Resource Center in Tulsa, OK, but has become so successful that it is now an independently incorporated group. Participation is primarily for youth and children, but adults and parents are also encouraged to join.

- In Tucson, AZ, the Indian Student Advisor works with school counselors and with the "student resource (police) officer" (SRO) to identify students involved in gang activities and bring all other available school and community resources to bear in an effort to successfully intervene and reduce the level of gang membership and violence. They also have held staff awareness workshops for teachers and administrators on gang activities. Young people (mostly boys) tend to join gangs when they are unhappy in school, getting poor grades, and unhappy at home. The gang does not ask why you are getting low grades, they accept you as you are.

- The Futures Through Leadership Program (a subsidiary within Futures for Children) in Albuquerque, NM works with youth for a year-long training program. Students are brought into Albuquerque and provided training in leadership skills including communication, self-help, problem solving, and public speaking. Then they go back to their home communities and work with a mentor to start community service projects based on their own concerns. Projects have included establishing SADD groups, community clean-up, and community libraries. The program is very successful because it enhances students' leadership skills, builds their self-esteem, and allows them to give back to their communities in ways that make things better for everyone.

II. Prenatal and Infant Health

Issues and Problems

- According to one doctor with the Arizona Indian Health Service, Indian babies are strong and very healthy when they are born, and after about six weeks, they begin to lose weight and show signs of poor health. This could be attributed in part to economic factors, but other health-related issues also contribute.

- Because of widespread alcoholism, an increasing number of Indian babies are being born with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and are handicapped from birth. Then they are not properly cared for in infancy which further complicates their problems.

- Problems with alcoholism have been around for a long time, but today they seem worse and we have added new problems like AIDS and the effects of cocaine and crack. Crack babies are particularly hard to deal with, even as infants, because they cry all the time, hardly sleep, and grow up to be emotionally disturbed. Some of these children are now entering preschool and are creating problems for teachers who have a very hard time controlling them in the classroom.

Recommendations

- Good family planning should be encouraged for Native American families.

- Prenatal care and education are essential for young women expecting their first child.

- Traditional ways emphasize caring for your mind, taking care of your hygiene, and proper eating and exercise--all within the context of having respect for the gift the Creator is giving us through this womanhood, the doorway into the spirit world. School and health systems must allow us to share this concept even though it does not fit any of their structured guidelines.

- Traditional ways in some tribes suggest that young expectant mothers would seek instruction from their mothers' sisters and cousins. This instruction is considered sacred and private, and because reprimands are given through the aunt or cousin, this way preserves the close bond between the mother and daughter.

- Tribes have an inherent right to self-government. The new grant system that is currently being tried should allow tribes to take action on behalf of their own people even when such action might be interpreted as being in violation of the Civil Rights Act. For instance, one tribe tried to pass a law four years ago that would enable them to intervene with a pregnant girl who is known to be a substance abuser (by placing her in a treatment facility--with or without her consent) in order to protect the fetus. They were not allowed to do so because it was ruled to be a violation of the mother's rights.

Programs and Strategies that Work

- In some parts of Alaska, the Alaska Native Sisterhood provides ongoing prenatal support to young expectant mothers.

- Parents Anonymous programs can be helpful in providing education to young parents about how to be good parents, including nurturing skills, teaching children about values, behavior management, and the difference between punishment and discipline. This kind of program should be more widely available.

III. Substance Abuse Prevention

Issues and Problems

- Many of the problems Indian children are having in schools are related to the fact that they come from alcoholic homes. Increasingly schools have to meet the emotional needs of students as well as their academic needs.

- Inhalant abuse is becoming a widely prevalent health problem among Native American youth according to a representative from Western Behavioral Studies. In fact, while use of almost all other drugs is decreasing, use of inhalants is on the rise and almost at epidemic proportions on some reservations. Inhalants are popular because they are cheap and very accessible, more than most other substances. Popular inhalants include spray paint, gasoline, canned heat, and Lysol mixed with other substances. The resources to deal with inhalant abuse are extremely limited and there is not a single treatment center in the country that specializes in this area. Inhalant abusers have some very unique problems. Some of the solvents kids are using contain more than 100 different chemicals with complex interactions that, over a long period of time, can lead to severe brain damage and even death. Thirty days--the average time for other types of detoxication treatment--doesn't even begin to detox an inhalant abuser who may need treatment for up to a year. We need to establish a treatment center to treat kids with these problems, and we need to provide better education about the harmful effects of inhalants.

- The Great Sioux Nation is concerned that schools serving the 15 tribes in its tri-state Midwest area are unable to deal with the increased number of kids who enter school with psychotic behaviors that are related to drug and alcohol use. There are no institutions to serve these kids in the Midwest area. Some of them come in from out-of-state institutions with medication that schools do not know how to administer. They disrupt the entire school.

- Alcohol and drug abuse needs to be addressed in Bureau schools as well as the public schools. It is like having an "elephant in the living room." It is there and everyone knows about it, but we need to enforce the regulations and do something to address the problems. Use of drugs and alcohol adversely affects students' health, grades, and attendance.

Recommendations

- We are going to have to heal ourselves from within, and the best initial prevention measures we can take include the following:

  * We must demand that our leaders initiate programs to address this issue and begin by asking tribal council members to serve as role models.

  * The community leaders who serve in tribal judicial systems, law systems, enforcement systems, and sit on tribal committees are going to have to sober up and start working together.

- Once programs are in place, tribal councils must pass laws that require whole families to get counseling and substance abuse prevention services when one of their family members are picked-up for abuse problems.

- We need more teacher training to help teachers identify and address the emotional needs of children of alcoholics. Also school climate needs to become more traditional to better reflect the values of the community and to promote students' emotional growth. Support groups are an important and useful strategy in providing needed emotional support and may be far more beneficial than remedial academic programs.

- We must provide education on the effects of alcohol abuse and on health and wellness for our children while they are still in grade school--preferably beginning in the first grade and continuing up through high school.

- It is important to stress the need for some of our traditional ways to be brought into programs that address the problems of alcohol and substance abuse. Treatment centers need to be educated to permit members of the community to become involved in treatment from a traditional perspective, even though it may not fit their guidelines.

Programs and Strategies that Work

- The Navajo tribe has received a grant for drug and alcohol programs that are linked to traditional healing practices. The programs are based on the fundamental concept of achieving balance and order in one's life. Balance involves four areas: (1) prayer and spirituality which come from learning traditional values, (2) self-esteem coming from skills and being able to provide for one's self and one's family, (3) maintaining social wellness and being able to get along with other people and with your community, and (4) maintaining a relationship with one's physical environment. The concept of order is related to respecting and honoring the traditional hierarchy between Elders and parents and youth. The tribe has developed a K through 12 curriculum based on these principles for use in the public schools and the BIA boarding school, and provides awareness training for parents, teachers, and health professionals. The response has been very, very positive.

- Chemawa Alcoholism Education Center at Chemawa Indian School in Oregon provides intervention services to students who are written-up for substance abuse violations. Intervention is coordinated by an inter-disciplinary team which includes residential, academic, counseling, and drug and alcohol staff. The violation and related issues are discussed by the team and the student, an assessment is completed to identify the level of the problem, and treatment is prescribed. If the student is chemically dependent, he or she is referred to treatment, or can choose to go home and get outside treatment before coming back to Chemawa. The program is strongly linked to rehabilitation aftercare (RAC) staff in the students' home communities. These people provided summer support services and verify sobriety prior to beginning of Fall semester. In four years since the program began, violations have dropped from 1300 to 630. Out of ten students that were sent home because they refused treatment services, eight got into treatment at home and returned to Chemawa.

- Futures for Children is a nonprofit organization that serves Native Americans from the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Tsiamshian tribes, and works with communities to help them address their own needs--which often include substance abuse prevention. For adults in communities, the Futures for Children board has distributed a booklet entitled Protecting Youth from Alcohol and Substance Abuse, available from the Native American Development Corp., Washington, D.C.. The key to Futures for Children's success has been involving community members in generating ideas for addressing their own problems and then recommending appropriate resources.

- Bristol Bay Health Corporation in Alaska represents 26 villages spread over a vast area. To encourage curriculum development related to substance abuse, the Health Corporation has drawn up graphs for each village to portray the incidence of alcohol/drug-related deaths and suicides. The results are startling and have motivated schools and their students to take action. Students have been especially involved in developing strategies for persuading their older brothers and sisters against using snow machines, boats, airplanes, etc., while consuming alcohol.

- In Juneau, AK, the Native Parent Committee has developed support activities by raising money to fund special events as incentives for improved school performance. This is important because in small communities throughout Southeast Alaska there isn't much to do in the evenings or on weekends. The committee is also currently working on attendance and has learned that alcohol and drug abuse is a key contributor to high absenteeism. They have learned that parents are not that concerned about their students' attendance records, so they have implemented a home-school counseling strategy to enlist the parental help in getting their children to school on a regular basis. By identifying the problem at an early age, they feel they can have a more successful impact than if the problems are left until middle school or high school.

- In Chinle, AZ, the school has introduced a Peer Helper Program where students are trained through a counselor to listen to other students and help them deal with their problems. The first year activities were offered within a club format, but this year they have been changed into classes. If problems are too serious, the peer helpers refer them to the school counselor. This approach has been very effective in preventing suicide and helping kids who have problems at home. The Peer Helper Program is also linked to the Community Action Through Children and Youth Program (CACY) where students are involved in community service projects of their own design. Many students are involved in drugs and alcohol because they have nothing else to do in the small communities where they live, so community service projects meet this need with a positive alternative. Also the Student Council is involved in setting up Red Ribbon Week and Substance Abuse Week where the entire community is drawn in to participate in conferences and workshops.

- To counter problems of stereotypical images of "the drunken Indian," one program tries to empower its youth to challenge those kinds of stereotypes and to speak-up when people make disparaging and prejudicial remarks by countering them with positive statements. For instance, when one student said he didn't know one Indian who was sober, the counselor challenged him by offering to name 10 sober Indians for every one he could name who was a drinking person.

IV. Suicide Prevention

Issues and Problems

- Younger and older people who commit suicide do so because they don't see any future ahead of them and see no reason to live. All of the problems we are experiencing, whether it is alcoholism, drug abuse, suicide, sexual abuse, or others go back to the dysfunction of our communities and our tribes.

Recommendations

- When a student mentions suicide, they should be taken seriously, even though they may appear to be joking. Counselors recommend asking them directly if they are serious and if they have a plan, or how they think they might do it. This will get them to talk more about what they are really thinking and then the counselor can either work with them or refer them for outside help.

- Caution is urged against glamorizing a suicide either through media coverage or by symbolic gestures (like setting aside an empty chair draped with a Pendleton blanket at graduation for that student), since this might trigger other suicides.

Programs and Strategies that Work

- To address problems of suicide or teen death "epidemics," Window Rock High School held an assembly and then class meetings to give students a chance to express their feelings of anger and frustration. Then to further help them release their anger, a marshmallow fight was staged. In addition, teachers made themselves available to talk with individual students who needed it, and the school held an early morning traditional prayer service for all students who wished to attend.

V. Other Issues

- In Juneau, AK, the Native Parent Committee is working with particular schools where teachers or administrators are known to have prejudicial attitudes by identifying the problems they are having with Indian students and discussing them frankly. The committee is compiling records on several schools to take to a school board meeting and looking for other avenues to make schools more accepting and comfortable places for Indian students. They are also using the student outcome goals published by the Alaska Department of Education as a yardstick for working toward school accountability for Indian students.

INAR/NACIE Joint Issues Sessions
NIEA 22nd Annual Conference - San Diego, California
October 16, 1990

"Early Childhood Education"

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Summary: "Early Childhood Education"

The first session on early childhood education was co-hosted by INAR Task Force member Janine Pease-Windy Boy and NACIE Council member Helen Scheirbeck. The second session on this issue was co-hosted by INAR co-chair William Demmert and NACIE Council member Buck Martin. The following issues, recommendations, and exemplary programs were discussed:

I. Head Start

The Success of Head Start

- Head Start is a national preschool program for three- and four-year-olds, with participation limited to families with lower incomes. However, Secretary Sullivan of Health and Human Services has said their goal is to have every child in Head Start, regardless of income. Head Start involves parents in the classroom and allows parents to make decisions. The program encompasses education, social services to support the family, and health, nutrition, and mental health. Ten percent of all children recruited must be handicapped, and these children receive special money and special services. The plan for the next 25 years is to include infants and toddlers, and after school programs for latchkey children.

- Head Start is a well-established program. It has been acclaimed by both political parties and by the governors who regard it as the number one priority for all early education. It is the one program out of the war-on-poverty that has survived and done well because of its success with children, as demonstrated through statistics.

- It is important that national associations support the legislation for Indian Head Start. Currently there are 124 Indian Head Start programs in the United States, and Head Start is one of the most successful programs on reservations. Besides benefitting the children, Head Start has enabled parents to become board members, tribal members, and advocates for their children.

Problems

- Head Start programs on reservations do not correspond to BIA or public schools. Training occurs in both Head Start and in reservation schools in kindergarten and first grade; however, these programs remain isolated from each other. It is difficult not to have these two programs working together. The transition of Head Start students into kindergarten or first grade is not handled very well.

- Indian Head Start programs do not feel as if they are recognized by professional organizations for early childhood.

- There needs to be much better coordination between Head Start, Health and Human Services regional offices, and the U.S. Department of Education. There also needs to be correlation between BIA early education programs and the state programs. In the reviews that I have done, I see Bureau, private, and state schools on the reservation not even talking to each other.

- There are more students who desire to enroll in Head Start than eligible spaces in Juneau, AK.

- Head Start is not meeting our aspirations because of inadequate funding and resources, and a limited availability of services.

Recommendations

- In Santa Barbara County, the Los Ninos Head Start operates under the umbrella of a community action commission. It may be possible for other programs to get under the umbrella of the county superintendent of schools or other organizations to help fund programs.

- We need to find data on the impact of Head Start and develop a tracking system to determine its success. We currently don't have enough data to be able to say a certain percentage of Head Start participants actually graduated from high school and went on to college.

Head Start Personnel

- The need for training parent groups and Indian Head Start staff is tremendous because we do want our local people to constitute the staff of Head Start programs. Salaries are very low, there is turnover, and therefore training needs are great.

- There is not one Indian in any of the jobs in the national Head Start office. Every consultant of the national office is Black, and many have not had any experience out in the field. While I am sure they are sensitive, I hope there would be people who have experience other than in Eastern cities. Without diverse experiences, it would be difficult to understand how Indians operate out in the world.

- Head Start teachers need to have the basic information to be able to help those children that are coming from low income or dysfunctional families, such as those that house alcohol or drug addiction.

- When we hire teachers we need to allow some money for their training needs because it's impossible for them to get other help. If they are not going to school full-time and taking 12 credits, they are not eligible for financial aid. If no money is provided in Head Start for training, then we are not going to have teachers equipped to work with the students and their parents.

II. Early Childhood Programs

Recognition of the Need

- National Indian organizations--National Congress of American Indians, National Tribal Chairman's Association, National Indian Education Association--have not espoused early education. There is very little discussion of early education at any of their conferences, including this one. This issue needs to be addressed.

- The National Association of Early Education is the only organization that addressed the issue of Indian early childhood education. Each year at their annual conference they hold an Indian caucus, and host several presentations on Indian children.

- We are experiencing younger and younger parents--kids themselves who are having children. In one of our HUD housing centers, there are almost 99 percent single mothers with many, many small children in the area.

Problems

- It is a struggle for learning centers to provide culturally-based curriculum because there is so little available. Red Lake considers their day care as a learning center, not a babysitting service. We read to children, introduce the alphabet and the numbers, and do many activities to prepare them for Head Start. However, we are having trouble finding curriculum for the children. I just learned of a book company in Boston that focuses on books for people of color and hope to find materials there. The curriculum for Head Start is too advanced for our two- and three-year-olds, but we believe we must start teaching children at this age and not wait until Head Start.

- Schools are pushing kids faster than they are developmentally prepared to progress. It is not appropriate to expect kids to know certain things before they enter kindergarten. As a result, we have an increasing number of junior first classes comprised of kids that went through kindergarten and couldn't do all of the work. They are placed in a pre-first grade class because they weren't developmentally ready, and are consequently being labeled as special education kids.

- Assessment tests are culturally biased. They don't take into account the personality of a child, their cultural background, or the learning styles of the child. Those who fit into the mainstream do fine, but those who don't are going to be separated more and more as they are put into a junior first class and labeled as developmentally slow.

- In Juneau, AK there is a concern that different early education programs begin to segregate kids. Rich families send their children to Montessori schools; low income people send their kids to Head Start; and, Native people send their children to JOM programs, regardless of income levels. There is no intermingling of the groups. There is a feeling that we need to provide more opportunity for the students to mix together so later on when they're in public education they will have had the earlier experiences of being together. In Juneau we are trying to figure out ways to do that among ourselves. We're considering an exchange program with our staff, or visitation program in which the students go on field trips to other schools.

Recommendations

- We need to offer children a lot of opportunities to create artwork and play with shapes. Just as children have to be allowed to play with language and sound to allow the brain to develop and distinguish different sounds and words. Before they are forced to learn letters, they need to understand what a combination of "squiggles" mean.

- The Montessori model of a prepared environment could bring both the child's Native culture and the dominant culture into a day care program.

- All children, including Native American children, tend to grow along similar developmental patterns. Therefore it is necessary that people to be aware of the developmental activities that children perform at different ages. When Head Start was first established, the teachers treated the students as if they were older and consequently didn't give them a lot of hands-on activities. Interaction should be different for two- and three-year-olds than for five- and six-year-olds.

- We need an environment rich with manipulative activities and staff trained in observing children and noting their interests so we can discover learning preferences and styles of the children.

- Rich Indian cultural activities are some of the best activities for children. Research shows that children need a lot of development of eye, brain, and hand manipulation, and all of that is encompassed in our cultural craftwork. Furthermore, being active in traditional activities provides a place for socialization.

Exemplary Programs

- Red Lake Reservation in Minnesota has the largest Indian school in the state. We have an in-school day care as a major service to keep the teen parents in school. Our day care serves mostly infants and toddlers, with our three- and four-year-olds spending part of the day at the reservation Head Start. We are licensed by the State of Minnesota which enables us to receive county monies for reimbursement. Consequently, we have some really strict guidelines that we must follow which is a real struggle for us because the local community is not trained in early childhood education.

  Any teen parent that brings their child to the day care is required to take two classes and be in the day care center three times a day. (1) They have to be in a lab class which is essentially taking care of day care responsibilities such as helping out with chores and running the day care. This is a credit course that counts towards graduation. We are currently developing a curriculum to work toward an outcome-based mastery of parenting skills based upon early childhood guidelines. (2) They spend time with their children, and are required to feed them at lunch. (3) They attend an actual parenting class. This is a regular academic class where they receive instruction in mental health, physical health, career, and living skills.

  The students who use the day care are about 95 percent mothers, and five percent fathers. We have a growing number of teen fathers in the program because we now have a three-year grant to have a teen father counselor who is working specifically with the dads to help them stay in school and help them decide where they are going to go after graduation.

  We have developed our own curriculum that teaches Ojibwa numbers, alphabet, animals, and other basic items. Our day care uses both English and Ojibwa. We also have a grandparents program to bring the Elders into the day care to help out. One of their purposes is to speak Ojibwa.

- During the time that INAR Co-Chair William Demmert was Commissioner of Education in the State of Alaska, Governor Cooper granted a budget increase from $4 million to $12 million for early childhood education. For a small state, that increase is significant. There are no records yet of the successful effects, but there are records across the United States that tell us early childhood education is a very important focus.

- In Oklahoma City there is a medical school that has a preschool program. The director of the program provides the children with Indian culture in the classroom and creates a sense of interest, excitement, and understanding. As part of teaching the culture, the teacher took the kids to a nearby reservation. It is important to have funds available to take children out of the classroom. First their attention is focused in the classroom and then they are prepared to take in the experience outside of the class.

III. Entrance into Kindergarten

Problems

- Children are being subjected to admissions tests to get into kindergarten. Particularly if schools are pressured space-wise, they are looking for ways to weed out a few students. Schools are setting required competencies to enter kindergarten that are much too high for most of our Indian children who have not had experiences expected of them. The schools need to look very carefully at that because requirements are not based on appropriate developmental levels of children.

- At the Crow Reservation they count the children in Head Start to inform the schools how many children will be enrolling in kindergarten. However, the school does not respond to these notifications. One particular year the school was prepared for a kindergarten class of 35, but there were 50 kids ready to attend. There was a tremendous delay for 15 students who waited one whole year to go to school.

- There is a correlation between children who are two or three years older than their class and dropping out. Some of the complication begins to happen in the gap between Head Start and the lack of receptiveness at the kindergarten level. This is further compounded by the fact that in many states kindergarten is not a part of the system, or it is an optional program.

Recommendations

- An active parent-teacher association could help mend some of the problems of readiness assessment. Santa Barbara County teachers refused to administer the left-brain dominant readiness assessment and met together in the evening to construct their own test. We need to encourage local government and local authority (parents) to join with the teachers to determine what readiness is.

- In Juneau, AK, all kids who are five-years-old by August 15 are entitled to enroll in kindergarten, and the school district is required to find room for them. The schools sometimes must hire additional staff and search out places to hold the kindergartens. The only problem with this system is that some children miss the cutoff date for admission by only a few days. If the parents feel they are old enough to attend school, the children must go through some rigorous testing in order to get in.

IV. Early Childhood Educators

Teacher Training

- Some Indian community colleges do have Indian early education programs. I would encourage community colleges to beef up their early education programs and provide child development associate (CDA) programs so that people can get a certificate. Many people will never go to college, but a CDA says that they are competent child caregivers.

- CDA requirements are changing and will be harder for local people to meet because they now require more postsecondary classes as opposed to just inservice training. For example, training on the Red Lake Reservation is an issue because in order for their staff to get trained, they have to drive 30 plus miles to get to Bemidji to take classes. This is particularly difficult to do in the long Minnesota winters.

Problems with Teacher Salaries

- The pay scale of child care workers is horrendous. We have a 41 percent turnover rate in our program every year because the pay scale is so low. Teachers know they are better off on welfare than they are working because teachers make only $7,000 - $8,000 a year. This salary puts them right above the welfare line and thus ineligible for assistance. If they have three children to support, it is impossible for them to make ends meet.

- Because there is a strong commitment towards early childhood programs, when they are first established, organizations and administrators who run the programs take advantage of that commitment and the salaries are not commensurate with the value of the employees.

- There is a battle in Alaska between Health and Social Services and educators about where financial support for those programs ought to originate. If it comes through Health and Social Services, the salaries will continue to be low. If it comes through education, the teachers' union will force those salaries up and they'll be consistent with teachers' salaries across the state. We have a mixture of the two kinds of programs in Alaska that supports this statement: programs started by schools have salaries that are consistent with teachers' salaries, while programs tied to Health and Social Service activities have salaries that continue to be consistently low.

V. The Role of Parents

Parental Training

- Parents need training in advocacy. They need to know how to help their children throughout their entire school career and that they have a voice and a right to talk about what's needed for their children. They should be trained in early education so they can be better parents.

- We need a school-based parenting curriculum. Currently there are only six- or eight-week programs geared toward people not in school. Red Lake requires a parenting class for graduation, but it is set for someone who comes in for two hours a night, once a week for eight weeks.

Parental Involvement

- The parent-teacher partnership is very critical. I suggest appointing a parent representative so that the dialogue with schools continues to be rich.

- Indian parents should have the opportunity to determine the values from both the dominant culture and from their Indian culture that they want to be part of the curriculum.

VI. Financing Early Childhood Programs

Problems

- Starting a day care center presents a financial struggle because most reservation facilities are usually quite old. Red Lake spent $30,000 renovating its facility in order to make it acceptable for parents and for licensing standards. We spent $30,000 up front to make the facility fire and health safe, as well as acquiring curriculum materials and beds. In addition to the initial expense, the school board is putting out $50,000 of its own money every year to support it. It is very costly but it has proven to be a successful way to keep teens in school. It is successful in the long run because it lowers the dropout rate.

- The new child care legislation may go through Title XX for child care funding if doesn't go to the Department of Education. If this is the case, funding will not reach Indian programs because Title XX usually does not go to reservations.

Recommendations

- The new child care bill could make it difficult for Indian programs to get any money from states. In California they are systematically closing Indian programs throughout the state. I would suggest a set-aside for Indian programs in the child care bill.

- When there is not enough money to go around, we need to work very carefully on doing things cooperatively to bring them to a higher level.

VII. Language Acquisition

How Language is Acquired and Recommendations for Schools

- Linguists know that the acquisition of the first language is experiential and happens at the subconscious level called the creative construction. This has to happen in some freedom and the environment has to be rich with language. I think we are going to need video and audio material to accompany children to prepared environments so that the children can see their culture and hear their language. You've got to put it in the environment and sensitize the staff to the importance of having the language and culture in the classroom. This should be authentic culture penetrating into the classroom.

- Youngsters need an opportunity to listen to a language. They need time to just absorb the language and we shouldn't force them to be talking all the time.

- Literacy implies the ability to communicate verbally and express ideas in the correct written form. On the other hand, language acquisition is a natural process in which we learn to speak. We hear it all of the time and suddenly we begin to speak when at a subconscious level the brain begins to make meaning out of sounds. Children just start speaking and we should not inhibit the process. We tend to assist them consciously, but it's a subconscious process.

- We can begin to provide non-threatening ways for children to explore and play with the symbols of the written language. If we allow them to follow their own process, and have a trained observing teacher and plenty of materials, children will put the written language together for themselves, just as they do verbally.

- Traditionally Native Americans have had only oral tradition. However, a whole system of literacy actually exists because literacy includes far more than the recordation of words. From the time babies are infants, they read people's faces, sounds, and surroundings. Even before they can verbalize, children are learning the notion of literacy. Consequently, the kind of verbal interaction adults have with children directly relates to their ability to become readers.

- Traditionally children were trained by grandparents, aunts, and uncles as a part of a traditional formal system for education. That training started as soon as a youngster learned to walk. However, we do not do this anymore; we have given up that responsibility to schools and churches. As practitioners in local communities, we need to consider picking up some of those earlier practices.

- Because there is a need for parents to work, children are being taken for schooling earlier. This makes the whole issue of language quite critical, especially if there is a desire to maintain the Native language. Culture and tradition are passed through the language, and caregivers are only able to transmit these values if they speak the language. Certainly this is easier to accomplish on the reservation than it is in mixed groups. Nonetheless, decisions need to be made about what we expect from caregivers.

- There should be linguistic consultants in local programs to bring these ideas to the staff and the recommend materials.

The Importance of Developing a Language Base for Other Learning

- Early childhood education is very important because at a very early age we establish a language base from which to learn. Establishing that language base is absolutely central to providing an opportunity for young Indian and Alaskan Native children to achieve and succeed in school. A language base is the key to developing other skills and intelligence necessary for success.

- There is value in learning a language early, especially for Indian or Native Alaskan communities that are interested in developing or strengthening the Native language base. Furthermore, a language base can be used for learning other languages, whether it is the Native language, English, or another foreign language. This is something we've stopped doing in Indian communities where many of our grandparents were bilingual.

- It is possible for youngsters to learn more than one language simultaneously and understand the difference between the two languages. They may mix the two, but that doesn't mean they don't understand them. When pushed, children can demonstrate that they understand there are two different languages.

- It is important to continue developing the first language as children move towards other languages. If you limit that development, you begin to limit the ability to develop the second language.

VIII. Urban Issues

- There are no programs available for urban Indians. The Indian Head Start money goes to reservations and it does not go to urban areas for Indian children. Furthermore, Indian children and families do not usually participate in urban programs run by the region. Either they don't know about the programs because the recruiting isn't right, or they don't stay in programs because they don't feel wanted.

- Indian children who are unaffiliated with a tribe are being denied services. We need unaffiliated Indian early childhood education monies available because currently we are recognized as Indians on the state level, but because we are not affiliated with a tribe, we are not granted federal status.

- The Santa Barbara Urban Indian Center serves 72 tribes in the area which were losing their sense of Indian identity. There is a big challenge in urban ares to house a variety of families and still create a sense of "Indianness." We can't expect people to identify themselves as Indians if we don't have anything in the urban areas that gives them a reason to identify as Indian. The Santa Barbara Urban Indian Center is having a mini powwow to attract families.

IX. Available Research

- The report of the Silver Panel for Head Start's 25th year covers the last 25 years and plans for the next 25 years. Head Start will include a day care to include infants and toddlers. It will also be linking with other agencies and do wraparound programs.

- A report done by the BIA with Bank Street college in 1978 describes the needs of young Indian children, age zero to eight, on 27 reservations. Their recommendations are just as good today as they were then. They suggested restructuring the BIA schools so that the greatest emphasis would be placed on children from prenatal through third grade, or eight years of age. By giving students everything they needed up until this age, when the students reached fourth grade, they could fly pretty well on their own.

- Governor Cooper of Alaska authorized a major report on early childhood education and parenting. This is an excellent piece that is a good source for people looking for additional information on the topic. This is a product of the Governor's Task Force on Early Childhood Education and was published through the U.S. Department of Education.

- The U.S. Department of Education put together a small piece on an early childhood education plan for the State of Alaska. That is available through the ERIC system.

- The National Association of Early Childhood Education has published research on Indian early childhood education in their magazine.

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"Elementary Schools"

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Summary: "Elementary Schools"

The first session on Elementary Schools was co-hosted by INAR Task Force member David Beaulieau and NACIE Council member Andrea Barlow. The second session on this issue was co-hosted by INAR Task Force member Ivan Sidney and NACIE Council member Robert Chiago. The following issues, recommendations, and exemplary programs were discussed:

I. Meeting the Special Needs of Elementary Students

School Restructuring

- Our elementary schools need to be restructured because they currently no longer meet the needs of our kids, either socially or academically.

- In restructuring the elementary setting, especially on a reservation, we first need to integrate various services. For example, at my school we brought an adult education program into the school. That way we have begun to work closely with parents and we can show students that we are here to educate everybody, including children, parents, and the community. The other reason that we brought in adult education was to create more alternatives for our at-risk kids to ensure that they complete high school and feel successful. I think we need to provide alternatives such as adult education or other programs for at-risk students to keep them off welfare.

  In my alternative classroom I tell my students, "Look, I'm giving you an opportunity. If you don't work in this classroom, you're going back to the regular classroom." They don't like to do that. There may be kids I haven't met who need a different arrangement than mainstreaming into a regular program, but we don't have that alternative right now. Bringing all methods of education into the same area would offer alternatives.

Special Education

- I am somewhat concerned about special education and the inability of schools to properly assess children with regard to their special educational needs because there is a great deal of misdiagnosis going on. There is a unique and special role for parents when they are required to be involved with developing and supporting the plans for special education.

- I have a child who is in special education, plus I have been an advocate for other parents with children in special education. The problem is that when you talk about legal requirements for parental involvement, it is not parents as partners, or parents as collaborators--it's parents as cake bakers. In this case, the cake they are baking is the child. Parents bring the child in and there is a recipe that they are supposed to follow. A typical meeting includes the principal, specialists, student teachers, and the classroom teacher. The parent walks in when this group is already assembled, and they say "Sign here. This is the program your child needs." If you ask any questions, they ask, "Where did you go to school? Are you trained to be a speech teacher, or are you a special education teacher, or are you a certified special day care teacher? What is your expertise?" In the special education process, the parents' role is simply to sign off on the program.

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If you can get your child signed up under special education for behavior modification, the school cannot expel your child for behavioral problems. That is the only positive comment I have to make about the special education process.

- Money is not available to meet the needs of handicapped children, and consequently these children are literally without services, reservation-wide. We need to look more closely at that law and seek out the necessary funding.

- On the Tulalip tribal reservation, we are concerned with the reading and language abilities of our children at the elementary level through the high school level. At a meeting with our special education specialist, we found out that we have a sophomore who is at the third grade reading level. He is currently in the tenth grade and has just been pushed through the system. These students are tolerated, and their behavior is overlooked. The specialist also pointed out six or seven individuals whom he labeled as being mildly retarded. This didn't sit too well with me because if they had been given one-on-one help in a resource room, they might have been taught the right way and wouldn't be in that situation. We see a lot of our kids who are getting up into the secondary level who can't read and who don't understand what they are doing.

- I am also from the Tulalip Tribe. There are five students at the middle school level who, if they don't drop out of school, may never reach the eighth grade equivalency level. Two of our liaisons were trained in Individual Education Program (IEP) testing, but are not active in the IEP testings. It would be interesting to find out how many liaisons on a national level are trained for testing our Indian children. Some Indian students have Fetal Alcohol Syndrome or come from families that are dysfunctional or illiterate. We need someone to take an interest in these children and make sure there is an Indian liaison or someone monitoring their tests and encouraging the students to try hard. The one tenth grade student at the third grade level said he didn't even try on his test because he thought he was already lost.

- We can establish a pre-referral process with a pre-referral specialist not associated with the special education department, so they don't have the vested interest of serving a child in special education. These people should be familiar enough with the culture that when they go into the home for pre-referral visits, they can ask appropriate questions. They can then fill out the pre-referral form and give an objective assessment of whether that child is actually an exceptional child with special needs.

Dealing With the Problems of FAS, FAE and Seriously Emotionally Disturbed Children

- I am the superintendent of the Pierre Indian Learning Center, which is a boarding school in South Dakota serving 15 reservations in the Aberdeen area office. I am concerned with the problems of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) and the lack of qualified staff to deal with the type of students we have today. South Dakota studies have shown that one out of every four children born on reservations is affected in some way by FAS or Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE). FAS results in the inability to learn and in severe behavior problems. Furthermore, these children often come from homes where they are physically or sometimes sexually abused, compounding the physical problems they already have. As an administrator of a school serving 15 different tribes, I feel the need for qualified staff. Most schools in our area cannot hire teachers for the emotionally disturbed, and often we have to use regular classroom teachers who are not qualified to deal with the severe behavioral problems of our students.

I think it's time, or past time, for the tribes to get together and start putting some pressure on the BIA and IHS to establish some sort of regional treatment centers for these kids. We do not have any place in our area where we can send these Indian kids who have severe behavioral problems or emotional problems, and usually if you send them back to the reservation and turn them over to Social Service, it becomes a financial problem. To send one child to a state or private facility costs $40,000 a year. Not too many tribes can afford that.

We really need a regional treatment center for kids whom the schools can't deal with. We are a boarding school that is supposed to be dealing with children with special needs, but we just cannot handle them. We don't have school psychologists or psychiatrists on our staff. We contract those services on a limited basis, but we just do not have the resources to keep these people on staff, despite our great need for them. These children need intensive counseling. If we get these kids when they are six or seven years old, there is a chance they can be saved. However, if we just tolerate them until they are teenagers, their problems get so bad that nobody can deal with them and they end up in state penitentiaries or in prisons. It is not fair to kids to just tolerate their problems. It is also not fair for a reservation, tribe, or public school to push them off into a boarding school to get them out of their hair, because we can't deal with them either.

The Benefits of Small Schools

- Red Lake, Minnesota, has just passed a policy requiring a maximum of 15 students per class in the early elementary grades as a strategy for improving academic achievement. Achievement is thought of in two ways: (1) enabling students to accomplish the intended objectives, and (2) enabling them to learn how to learn in a fashion that will sustain achievement over a long period of time.

- Despite a rural consolidation policy, the State of Minnesota has allowed a number of school districts with elementary schools in Indian villages and reservations to maintain those schools because they are effective. Grand Portage Elementary School serves 30 students in grades K through 8, organizing the school into two different grades, early elementary and late elementary. It's a very effective school that seems to enable students to be very successful in the high school.

- What our small school does for the children that big schools don't do is more in the affective area--we treat the children as individuals. There is a bigger school system close to us and we tend to get many of its students because they can't handle the big size. And almost without exception, the students who transfer to our school do much, much better. They seem to really like it better at our school, and I think it is probably due to the smallness of the classes and because we are able address the needs of each student. Being a small school in a small, isolated community allows us to see potential problems a student may be experiencing at home and enables us to do things to help. We may not be able to change his or her home life, but there are certainly things we can do to make that child feel a little better and alleviate some of the pain that he or she is experiencing. So I think that we need smaller schools. We also need to remember, in evaluating schools, that it is not just important that students do better on test scores, but that they feel happy and at home in the school, and they have opportunities for personal growth.

Generally, the students who are in the brighter half of the class academically are successful in making the transition to high school, but those in the lower half have a lot of trouble making the transition to a bigger school. I don't think it really has to do with academics, per se. I think it's more of a social matter because the students who tend to drop out do so not for academic reasons, but for other reasons. Socially, they have problems integrating with the other students. The area where I live is a fairly isolated and traditional community, and the students go to high school in the most urban area of the reservation. The students who grew up in the urban area are different. For example, in our school there are not many people who listen to heavy metal music, but at the other school, this is what many of the popular kids are involved in. The kids from the urban area are on a different wavelength, and our kids have trouble relating to it, or fitting in.

Urban Indians

- The needs of urban Indians are not being addressed, especially in Los Angeles. Los Angeles has the largest Indian population in the state today, but they have a hard time getting funding because they are not a reservation. A lot of the children who grow up there lose a lot of their cultural identity. The small office of Indian education and the Indian centers can only do so much. It is hard for one small Indian center to reach all of the people. We lose a lot of Indian kids culturally and educationally in the formative, elementary years because they don't see many Indian mentors showing them what they can do in urban areas.

II. Academic Program

The Impact of Standardized Testing

- I have a real complaint with standardized testing. I feel that the emphasis on standardized tests and the way they are utilized in the Bureau designs the curriculum itself.

- Our students have to take the California Achievement Test which handles only a very small range of skills. It is directed towards basic skills and doesn't even look at writing. I feel that education needs to be much more holistic. The Bureau's emphasis on standardized testing tends to push the curriculum so that it primarily addresses the very, very basic skills and doesn't allow for very much critical thinking. Furthermore, it doesn't get into other issues such as the emotional needs of the students, for example, seeing how many come from homes where alcohol and drug abuse is a problem.

  We need a more holistic way of teaching that addresses those emotional needs of children. Even though it's not addressed very often in school, I'm a strong believer that even spiritual issues should be addressed in some way, even if it's only through teaching the traditional values of the community. I feel that often the emphasis on standardized tests takes away from that because many of the teachers aren't Native Americans and their primary concern is teaching the few basic skills measured by the test.

- I was wondering if we have any data available from Canada, because we seem to be going in a different direction than they are. We have minimum requirements, whereas we ought to be thinking more about maximums. This is especially true when tests are elevated to such a high level of importance, because we are really running a test-based curriculum. I'd like us to investigate the Canadian system in which they don't emphasize minimum standards and consequently are able to move into higher thinking skills.

Native Language and Culture

- It is interesting that there are many different reasons why Native language is offered in schools. In areas where the language is dying out, instruction becomes critical as a way to maintain the language. In other areas it becomes critical to teaching English. These are the different things we consider in language policy as it affects elementary schools, particularly when you have children coming from different backgrounds.

- We are a small school on the Navajo reservation that is sandwiched between big BIA schools and the nearby public school. We get all of the children that have special needs and we've become known as a special school. We have students in K through 6 who have all kinds of emotional and social problems. We are currently in the process of developing a curriculum that will meet the students' needs. Our community is very traditional, but the children speak a language that is between English and Navajo--not too much English and not too much Navajo. Their competency in both languages is low. For instance, a second grader from that community will speak both languages, but the Navajo will not be totally Navajo, it will be a kind of slang. The Navajo is just used for basic conversation, but it interferes with the learning of English. So we're trying to teach the Navajo language in our Navajo culture and language class, to try to teach students the sounds and to appreciate the language. We do this on the presumption that in order to learn English one has to be competent in his or her first language. We're trying to at least teach the grammar and the language of formal Navajo as a vehicle to enable students to learn English. However, we have students who already speak some English, and there are only a few that are fluent in Navajo. We also have some students who understand a language but don't speak it. That is why we have our language class.

- On our reservation we have two tribes: the Shoshone Tribe at the eastern end and the Arapaho Tribe at the western end. The Wyoming Indian High School and the elementary school offer both the Shoshone and Arapaho languages. The two Arapaho schools on the western end, Arapaho and St. Stevens, incorporate the Arapaho language into their schools. They also have a "language bowl" in which they compete against other schools in the Arapaho language. I would like to see if someday we could have the Shoshone language incorporated in the Fort Washakie School. We have never been able to do this because we have people who sit on our boards who are not enthusiastic about the Indian culture, or they don't see the need for us to have the Indian culture taught. I don't think they understand that we need to work on developing the language because it is starting to die out and our people need to have this knowledge. The Arapaho School and Wyoming Indian School are now starting up language classes for adults and parents because it does no good for the students to learn the language and never hear the language at home.

- We have high academic achievement in our school but our cultural participation is at a minimum. I blame this on the administration because they will not allow us to offer many cultural activities in our school. At first we were only allowed a half day for Indian Day; this is the first year they allowed us a full day. We have asked the Board if we could start having our young students learn the Indian dances because these are dying out. There are only a few people left who know how to perform many of the dances. We would like this type of instruction integrated into our school.

- We need to put our culture right in the classroom and not just with Title VII and Title V. It needs to be right in the math programs and right in the reading programs.

- I come from the San Carlos Apache Reservation. We have an Apache dance group that is part of the extracurricular activities (much like football) and performs on American Indian Day.

Teaching Strategies

- We need teachers who are intellectually, emotionally, and mentally tough. We need teachers who are tough, but firm and caring because many of our kids are complaining that they don't feel they are needed or wanted at the school. We need teachers who are flexible and who teach discipline and responsibility and do not just demand it. I think that in our old teacher education system we were taught just that--to demand respect from kids. But we forget that we are not in the same era anymore. The reason we have to upgrade and change our thinking and our teaching strategies is because we have different kinds of kids. We have kids that are very fragile and kids that have not been trained. These kids will look to the school if they feel it is a place where they can survive and learn social skills, as well as academic skills.

III. Parental Involvement

Barriers to Parent Involvement

- Parent involvement is needed as part of a basic restructuring of the schools. As a small school, I think we have much more community support than I see in other places, but I still feel that the parents as a whole don't feel as though it is their school. Regardless of the programs we design, the structure of the schools is still essentially based on an Anglo model that has been around for hundreds of years. As long as we have that model, parents are not going to consider schools as their own institutions. In the future we need parents, tribes, and the communities to take over schools. Parents should not just be on a board that makes a few decisions, but should assume responsibility for the schools.

- Too often schools bring parents in, ask them what they want, and they don't know what they want. It's not that parents don't want to be involved and it's not that they don't have ideas; I think it is the way we ask them for their ideas. I think that parents not only have to feel as though they are a part of the school, but they have to somehow run the school. Until that happens, we will always have a problem with parental involvement.

- The parents at our school are really involved, but mostly in extracurricular activities. We had several incidents with abuse, so now it is hard to get parents into the classrooms where they want to be because they have to go through a screening process. Even our parent volunteers have to go through a screening process where they have to fill out forms for the BIA and get fingerprinted. Parents can come into the school to observe and visit, but they can't work with the children until they are cleared through that process. This also affects our ability to attract teachers because they also have to go through that process. Currently we have three teaching positions that are not filled because prospective teachers are put through so much that they often back out.

- The basic structure of Bureau schools is such that the government is really in charge because it controls the regulations. Our school board can make some decisions and be fairly powerful, but it cannot do whatever it pleases because it is restrained by governmental policy and regulations. School boards used to just be advisory councils, but now the government lets them make some decisions. However, they are not necessarily the decisions that really affect the schools.

- I'm from a reservation in northern California, and right now we are making a distinction between education and schooling. We have a number of people in our tribe who are highly educated, but poorly schooled. We have found that the structure of the laws does not really promote parental involvement. Impact Aid gives the tribe the ability to set up a policy and procedures to ensure tribal and parental input. However, if that law is not carried out by the school district, the tribes' only recourse is to file suit against them and cut off all funds to the school district, which doesn't help. This is the same with Title V. There are no teeth in that law for parental involvement. I think that the federal government, especially the Department of Education, needs to look at a heavy monitoring process and also at changing that legislation so that it ensures parental involvement.

- Most areas that must have parental involvement such as Title V and Impact Aid tend to put parents on parade. You bring parents in to look at your back-to-school night. You bring them in to look at your school activities. You get them to bake cakes for your class. But parents as collaborators and parents as decisionmakers are not roles that most schools allow. How many schools have a sign that says, "Welcome parents?" How many schools have chairs for them to sit in the office, or even sit in the classrooms? No schools do because they want to send a message. Most of our schools in California have fences around them and gates to keep people out. That's the message that schools are sending.

- We have a difficult time involving parents in the schools because there seems to be a reluctance on the part of the professional staff to allow any non-professional people to actively participate in decisionmaking. When teachers are trained to believe that there are only four teaching styles and four learning styles, and you come in and tell them there are culturally-based learning styles, it goes against everything they believe. When the textbooks and curricular material reflect those teaching styles, we are designing a system for failure for parents. We have had to put the tribal education committee in a situation where they are advocates for the parents and adversaries to the school, because the school has a hidden curriculum. I don't think it is any business of the school to be socializing my children. The tribe has the ability to socialize children, and we have educational systems that are deliberate, systematic, and sustained that have been operating for generations. We train people how to be Hoopas. We educate them to be Kiowas. We educate them to be Hopis. When we send our children to school, we do not want them to be socialized as general Americans. The laws and the structures of this land are designed so that schools are a social imposition for social control. We oppose that.

- We are trying to give parents the ability to be partners and collaborators. Most parents want their children to go to school, but they object if going to school means the children have to stop being who they are and stop being a part of their community. Parents should have the ability to sit down and make a decision on what textbooks are going to be used in the school, what programs are going to be taught, and what the curriculum should look like. But approaching parents and giving them two days to choose a textbook is a strategy that is bound to fail because what you have not done is train the parents to know what should be included in a textbook. I am not talking about parenting classes. I resent the fact that somebody gives a parenting class to tell me how I should raise my children, how much time on task and how much quality time I should have with them. I have learned that from my tribe. But they can teach me how to look at a textbook so that I can evaluate it. What does it mean to say "choose the best curriculum?" I, as a parent, have to know what a curriculum is in order to choose one. Otherwise, I am making a decision that could be harmful for my child, and I will not participate.

Programs and Strategies That Work

- Minneapolis has created a program called Niibin, which is Ojibwa for summer school. It is a unique elementary school program that allows parents to come in and be involved in the actual classroom teaching. The program provides day care at the same time for siblings who are not yet of school age.

- Our local school district has an Indian week. We sponsor a powwow, and throughout the whole week parents and grandparents come in and give demonstrations about our tribe. This has been a very powerful enforcer to build self-esteem with our Indian students.

- We have an Indian Day every Fall that involves the community, parents, and teachers. People begin practicing and putting together costumes two weeks ahead of time, and on the day all of the grades, K through 6, and all of the staff put on a dance. We have a big luncheon or a potluck, and have dances all day long. This is reservation-wide so all of the schools hold their Indian Day the same day. I think that really pulls everyone together. We also have a culture day in May when we bring the Elders into the school to do demonstrations on basket weaving, traditional cooking, and artistry.

- I belong to an eighth grade fundraising parents' group. Often it is difficult to get parents in school for different events, but this parent group attracts almost all of the parents to all of their sales. Sometimes we stay all night at dances to sell things. All of the parents are really involved in this because they know that this group is theirs; they have power to do whatever they want. The group belongs to them, and they make all of the decisions.

- I work in a very small school, and approximately 90 percent of our students are in Chapter 1. This year our Chapter 1 program is training parents to teach their children, and we pay the parents to come in and learn how to work with their children. This is a way of increasing parent involvement and having them feel more comfortable coming to the schools. They have a reason to be there, and they have a monetary incentive also. Most of our parents are not very educated and feel they can't really help. Hopefully through our program they will feel able to help their children.

- When I first took over the Title IV position in my school, I have had a hard time getting parents involved. It seems as if they don't like the idea of coming into the schools; for some reason it really intimidates them. I remember we couldn't even get parents involved in the parents' committee. We would tell them, "This Title IV is the only program that you have left where you actually have a sign-off. You plan this program. You do a needs assessment. This is your program." Still they would not come in. They don't seem to realize that these schools are theirs, these are their children, and they have the right to come out and speak.

  One of the things we are trying to do is to overcome this intimidation and create a comfortable feeling with the parents through an Indian Day. We asked each class to choose a tribe to study for about a month, and then to draw pictures of the tribe they studied and decorate their doors. That way, when parents come into the school, the students are able to tell about the traditions and heritage of different tribes. We have a 98 percent Indian enrollment at our school and the Shoshone students think they are the only tribe on the reservation. It is really nice for these students to learn that there are also other tribes, and there are some Indians who do not look Indian. Along with these studies, we also hold mini-workshops for making fry bread, beading, and making saddles. Sometimes our younger students who are in drama read legends to other students. We are able to involve a lot more parents through these activities and now they are actually planning the Indian Day.

- On our reservation we have a Wyoming Indian youth conference that involves administrators, teachers, students, and parents. This is a one-day conference with different workshops led by Indian role models. Seventh through twelfth grade students from all of our schools--Wind River, Arapaho, St. Stevens, Wyoming Indian, Lander, and Riverton--attend these workshops and receive awards for attending. This is another way to get our people involved in the educational process and for our students to see that there are Indian people who have degrees and are able to go out and do things. They see that life doesn't end on the reservation, and they gain a broader perspective of what is outside its boundaries.

IV. Funding

Facilities

- In our school we have old and new buildings. We need monies for new buildings to make the school and facilities attractive.

- I'm the facility manager at Loneman School in Oglala, South Dakota, and am particularly concerned about facilities. The issues that need to be improved in elementary education throughout Indian country are numerous, but I think we need to be concerned about facilities, because this is the first time that people are becoming aware of the dilapidation. Loneman School contracted their own facility services a year ago. We have spent the last year fixing up things that were very dangerous for our children, including outlets that were bare and exposed. This is how our children had to go to school. I think the Bureau has to assume some responsibility and put some money in the budget to bring these schools up to safety code standards.

- We have schools that have assumed facilities contracts, but the Bureau has not written into the budget the very basic tools needed to assume a facilities contract such as saws, hammers, and ladders. There is no shop space or money for tools written into the budget; however, we are still expected to perform the same way that the Bureau employees under facilities performed. This is a real crucial concern for the safety of our children.

- Many of the contractors who build our schools are shoddy individuals. Shopping centers built off reservations last for 10, 20, or more years. But on some reservations, there are some schools that last for only two years. I question the kinds of contracting that might be taking place in terms of facilities management. There may even be some problems with the "Buy Indian Act." Seven million dollars might be put into a school, and two or three years later the school is nonfunctional.

Transportation

- The rurality of schools in South Dakota is never considered in the Bureau's budget. Transportation money is never written into the budget, and yet we have kids in areas that cannot be reached by a regular, 60-passenger school bus. We need four-wheel drive vehicles because people live six, seven, or eight miles off of the road in what is known in South Dakota as "gumbo." And when that is wet, it will bog down even a four-wheel drive. None of these expenses are written into the budget, yet they are very real for the school. I also think that GSA has become outrageous with 50 percent. We need an avenue where we can purchase our own busses and get away from GSA because that is just unfair to the schools.

Curriculum and Materials

- At the Pine Ridge area schools, a teacher ordered school books during the summer and has still not received the books because there is no money. It is beyond me how we can have teachers teach classes without books just because there is no money. The Bureau is not meeting the very basic budget needs.

- The small schools are the ones that suffer because we take care of the children who migrate around and who have special needs, but we get very little money for our programs. We need funds for manipulatives, library books, and basic supplies. My proposal is for the BIA and the government to provide more money for curriculum development in the small schools, because currently there isn't any money available.

- Our curriculum is outdated. We need to address the need for funding for gifted programs in our schools. Many times people are labeled Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), but actually, their problems stem from the inability of the curriculum to meet their needs. There is a lot of FAS, but some of the behavioral problems are related to the child being gifted and the schools not having anything for them, particularly on the Pine Ridge Reservation. We have 14 different schools, and not one of them has a gifted program.

Unacceptable Funding Practices

- Tribes, tribal schools, and especially boarding schools have been fighting with the boundary issue for many years. We have a lot of problems with parents who want to send their children to boarding school, but BIA officials refuse to sign off on them. We had cases in which we enrolled students in our school with the understanding that the tribes will sign off on them, but they refuse to sign off until after the count week. Last year, on the first Monday after count week, we received 36 referrals from the 15 tribes that we serve. That is not fair. We had about six kids last year whom the BIA refused to sign off. As a result, neither we nor the tribes received funding for these students. We lost out on money and we are short to begin with. If the BIA is going to play politics with the tribal schools and the boarding school, the only loser is the children. These issues need to be resolved. We need to do something about the boundary and ISEP funding.

- Despite the budget problems Congress is having and the talks about sequestration of funds, I told my board that we would not close down. I have 160 kids here and I think the state still has an obligation to educate them even if we lose our funding. I was joking, but I said, "I'll just bus them down to the public schools. Then I guarantee you, we will get some action from the state senators when the white folks start complaining about the Indian students invading their schools. They will start supporting the tribal schools."

- We have a K through 8 school enrolling 1,049 students this year. We are in dire need of facilities. We are a public school and receive 874 funds that are earmarked for the total operation of the school. We don't have a tax base so we are reimbursed to offer the best educational curricula to the students. We do have some at-risk funds, and a 12-month salaried parental involvement coordinator. Our high school students are tuitioned out to off-reservation public schools and that is where we run into a lot of difficulties.

- It is wrong to continue to cut funding while we are giving Nicaragua $800 million and we are giving savings and loans people paid vacations to so-called prisons, and our children are going without.

Recommendations

- We should set up a system in which funding follows the students. If we only serve them for three months, we should give two-thirds of the money to their next school. However, this will be a problem with the boarding schools because we also get money for a residential program that we just cannot recover.

- ISEP funding in South Dakota is $2,500 for tribal schools; the states receive about $2,000 more to serve the kids. ISEP funding for students went up about $600 in the last ten years or so, while public schools went up about $2,000. I don't know the exact figures. The State of Minnesota has an agreement with the tribal schools in that it will supplement the tribal schools. For instance, ISEP funding is $2,500, and if the state gets $5,000 per student, they will reimburse the difference to the tribal schools. I think an agreement in all states should be worked out because the states still are responsible for educating these kids.

- We need to make salaries attractive for special needs teachers so they can come out to the reservation. Salary is their first consideration. It is so hard to get counselors, special education teachers, and enrichment teachers out to the reservations, especially to small schools.

V. Other

Trust Responsibilities

- I think we have good, solid leadership. The Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) governments are not yet 60 years old, and in looking at political development theory, we are right on course for developing governments in terms of some of the political corruption we have witnessed because that is normal for development. Our leaders are getting to a point where the public is becoming more participatory and demanding that their actions become legitimized. When this occurs, things will start falling into place. However, when we have hearings like this, and people are asked their input on the Bureau restructuring, and they take out the Aberdeen area office, I question the Bureau's leadership. What is their responsibility back to these tribes? We have treaty rights and 638 rights. We have self-determination rights that are being violated left and right by Bureau officials in Washington, DC. Bureau leadership has to be questioned as much as tribal leadership. Responsibilities and the rights that we as sovereign nations have need to be realized, including the right to education for Indian children.

INAR/NACIE Joint Issues Sessions
NIEA 22nd Annual Conference - San Diego, California
October 16, 1990

"Middle Schools and High Schools"

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Summary: "Middle Schools and High Schools"

The first session on Middle Schools and High Schools was hosted by INAR Task Force member Byron Fullerton, the second session on these issues was co-hosted by INAR Task Force member Joseph Ely and NACIE Council member James Shore. The following issues, recommendations, and exemplary strategies were discussed:

I. Overview of the Issues

- It is really discouraging for me to hear you asking us to identify successful programs we know about. I am familiar with two public high schools, a junior high, and an elementary school, and so far there seems to be nothing successful in their programs. We have a high dropout rate and many social problems you've already heard about, such as lack of parental involvement, teen pregnancy, substance abuse, and an increase in devil worship. Some of these problems are the same for every reservation. We have a lot more problems than we can handle.

  We need more input and we need more role models. But if we are going to send our people to school to become teachers or professionals, we need money, because a lot of our Indians are poor. We are trying. Our school district recently hired a parent coordinator to improve parent involvement because we believe that many of these problems could be alleviated if parents were more involved. But in the past, because parents were uneducated, they felt that the responsibilities were with the schools. Now we are trying to emphasize the partnership idea.

  The Task Force should be looking at all of these things. But I would also like to know what we can do at the grassroots level to help our kids. We have some ideas, but it seems like these reports come out year after year and they don't cure things.

- Some of the dropout problems we have are due to the lack of properly functioning support mechanisms. There are Title IV and Title V monies out there that should be providing this support. However, I believe that districts are abusing some of these funds. School districts need to be held accountable and asked to confirm that these monies are being spent to support the programs for which they were designated.

  I have a strong feeling that district people believe Native Americans aren't knowledgeable enough to play on this playing field. District administrators seem to believe they can satisfy the requirements and guidelines on paper much more quickly without involving tribal people.

  I also feel that people often provide "evidence" of their program's success that I would regard as "flim flam." For instance, even at this conference people try to promote their program's success with blatantly questionable evidence like a rap tape I heard yesterday. They said it was Indian folks, but for all I know it could have been M.C. Hammer. No effort was made to present any serious information or data that would confirm the program's impact on students.

II. The High Rate of Dropouts

Reasons for Dropping Out

- In trying to determine why students drop out, we haven't conducted a specific study, but we do go back to the homes of those students who have dropped out and ask them why they have left school and what we can do to try to get them back into the system. One thing we have found is that they get their money allotment when they are 18 years old. Many take that money and go out and buy a four-wheel-drive vehicle and squander the rest. Often they wreck the vehicle. This is a big deterrent to school completion. In a school of 90 students, we probably lose 7 or 8 kids a year because they turn 18 and get their money.

  Another big cause of dropping out is teenage pregnancy; a third is drug and alcohol use or abuse. Kids get caught in a partying cycle and the parents won't allow us to refer them to Indian Health Services or other counseling assistance or treatment. Some students transfer frequently between schools which tends to slow them down, but this is not as significant a problem as those related to 18th birthdays, teen pregnancy, and drugs and alcohol.

- I am superintendent of White Shield School at Fort Berthold in North Dakota. Our school serves about 150 students in grades K through 12. When our high school students turn 18, they receive their per capita allotment and they are gone. Often they take one or two students with them. They spend the money and party a little bit. There should be some way that money could be kept or not paid out until students have graduated from high school. In the last seven years we have lost about 20 percent of our students when they turn 18. It may be a local tribal council problem, but it is a real problem and we would like to find a way to stop this from happening. Some ideas we have had include witholding payment until graduation or making only partial payment.

- We have a similar situation. Our high school on the reservation graduates almost every kid who turns 18 after graduation. However, we lose about 50 percent of those who turn 18 before graduation.

The Transition from Middle to High School

- Middle school is a big transition point for our children because a lot of us who live on reservations have Indian schools on the reservation for elementary levels. When students reach middle and high school they must often go off the reservation and attend a much bigger, non-Indian school. This is a big factor in determining how our children succeed.

Teenage Pregnancy

- I am from Ethete, Wyoming, and I am school board chairman for Wyoming Indian schools. I have a couple of subjects I would like to bring up. One is teenage pregnancies in the middle school and high school years. My concern is that there needs to be federal funding to keep these kids in school. Funding could provide tutors to keep the young ladies in school while they are having their babies and afterwards. I think there needs to be federal follow-through to get these students back in school either through home-bound instruction or mainstreaming them back into the regular school.

- On teenage pregnancies: Since it is the decision of a student to put themselves into the position of becoming pregnant, do you think it is solely the responsibility of the federal government to pay for the extra amount of work that needs to be done to keep them in school, or do you think there should be a plan where it is jointly financed by the individual, either on a pay-back or half-and-half basis?

- I have to answer that question from a cultural perspective. As a member of the Northern Arapaho Tribe, when an incident takes place, we don't look upon it as being no good or bad. There is a new life coming into this world, so the first thing we do is accept the pregnancy. The young lady is going to have a child, so the relatives will get together and try to help her. But I also believe that the federal or state governments should help in some way to keep that child off the welfare roles. We want the young lady to learn to successfully rear and provide some kind of a living for that child. We shouldn't shift the responsibility from the mother and father, but we should provide support services and help them gain the necessary parenting skills. This includes technical and vocational skills.

Local Efforts to Curb the High Dropout Rate

- We have done some informal studies at my school. I have over 500 students in grades K through 8. There are three other neighboring BIA schools as well as a public school system. Students who have dropped out have indicated to us that their reasons include not being able to identify with what is going on in the classroom, teachers not really explaining what needed to be done, teachers going too fast, and insufficient time to complete class assignments. They felt that they had been put on a schedule with no flexibility. If they needed more time on a test, it wasn't allowed. They also felt defeated because teachers and other school staff members didn't seem to understand them. The easy way out was just to leave school.

This year we have started an alternative classroom at my school for 6th through 8th graders. We are having to re-do the curriculum by making 6th and 7th grade content readable for them. Most of the students are 6th graders; we tell them we are here to help them, but they need to do the work. We tell them frankly that they are in this classroom because they are behind two or more years and we are trying to give them a chance to catch up so they can graduate with their classmates.

We have control up to the point of 8th grade graduation, but then our students feed into the public high school. I know of a superintendent in one of the poorest counties in Georgia who is using our model with mostly black students. If his kids gain two years, he graduates them directly into the 9th or 10th grade. He has found that these kids need a challenge -- once they are given an alternative and challenging approach, they respond. He says that over the past three years he has had almost 100 percent success.

If our schools and the BIA could develop a partnership with the public schools it would help our kids a lot more than just pretending they will go through high school successfully. I know that at least one-third of my 8th graders have been given "social promotions," which means that they did not meet the minimum requirement of achieving a 6.0 grade level.

- All of the problems we have talked about as contributing to the high dropout rate--teen pregnancy, poor attendance, lack of credits--are symptoms of the system's failure to serve Indian students. We have to change that system. We do not want to adopt a system like that of the majority culture because it doesn't work for most Indian children. Indian education has to be based on an alternative system. I am the principal of the largest all-Indian high school in Minnesota. In the past four or five years we have been trying to change the system by implementing a variety of innovations. First, we are making sure that we have more Indian adults in the school than white adults. When I first came to the school it was an alien culture for the Indian students, so we began to bring in the Indian community. I think too many schools try to change the student to fit the school rather than changing the school to fit the student. As Indian educators, we need to do the latter.

- I am from Cuba High School, which is 80 miles north of Albuquerque in New Mexico. Our school serves the Navajo community from about five different chapters. We have a very high absentee rate. Our students start dropping out after they complete their sophomore year. The reasons they drop out include alcohol and drug abuse, teen pregnancy, low academic achievement, and having to ride long distances to the nearest public high school.

The longest distance any student has to ride on a bus to Cuba High School is about 60 miles one way. We start our classes at 8:50 am, so this means they must get up at 5:00 am and wait for the bus to pick them up at around 6:30 am. Then in the afternoon they repeat the process and arrive home late. This experience is a lot different from that of non-Indian students in urban areas or larger communities.

This year for the first time we are trying to institute an Extended Day School Program by providing dormitory accommodations for those students who meet our criteria. The criteria include (1) those students who are traveling the farthest distance, (2) those who have four Fs or more, and (3) those who have no running water and no electricity in their homes to do homework by. We feel that this program may help decrease the number of dropouts and the high absentee rate.

- We bus our kids in every morning and back every evening. I'm very proud of some of our Indian students. Those that participate in sports don't get home until 10:00 or 11:00 at night and then they have to do their homework and then head back to school by 6:30 or 7:00 the next morning. It is rigorous, but they are committed and they do it.

III. Parental and Community Involvement

- I am Governor Gil Vigil from Tesuque Pueblo in New Mexico. I served as chairman for the public school's Indian education committee. I have students going to boarding school in Santa Fe, and there is also a day school, so I have experience in all three areas. The problem of parental involvement is really hard to address at any level. Even when you have a lot of parents involved, it is likely to be at the bake sale level, or policing their children. We don't have parents involved in the Indian Education Committees or on the school boards where they should be--where we really need their involvement. The only ones you see there are those who you see all of the time, who are really concerned about their kids, and their kids are doing well. The parents who aren't involved are the ones whose kids are having problems.

- We have a public school in the middle of our reservation. We used to have a boarding school on the reservation, but now it is public. We have seen two major differences. I always chuckle about parental involvement because I find it an amusing concept, especially when I compare my parents' involvement in my education with what the school district now calls parent involvement. They really want parents as cake bakers and cops. That is their idea. They send home recipes and say "This is what we want your kid to look like. You feed him and clothe him, you bathe him--make sure he doesn't have any lice--send him to school on time, pick him up, come to back-to-school night and open house, and let us do our song and dance. We will send home the homework and you can sign off. You are the cop." So your kid is on probation at home. This sets up a very negative relationship.

They do not want parents as collaborators or as partners in the campaign for education. They don't want to recognize that we have valid input into the educational system.

- At our high school we have many Hispanics, Apaches, and Anglo students and very few blacks. We are currently in the process of working to build our own high school on the reservation because we feel that many of our students aren't getting the attention they need in the public school. This has been going on for years, but our efforts to leave have made some difference, because if the Apache students pull out, the public school will lose the money and their classification as a school also decreases. So now they are saying "Well, we've always been concerned about Indian students, you know. Well, what can we do?"

  First of all we have pointed out that we have no representation on the school board. They have said that we can have an ad hoc committee and a parent advisory board, but that is no assurance that we can get what we want in the schools. Lack of parental ownership in the education of students at the high school is a problem.

- In Oklahoma we no longer have the number of BIA controlled schools we once had. In my area we still have one that is tribally controlled, but it serves a very small portion of the total Indian population. So the major problems we have are with the public schools. When your tribal members are attending public schools and you want to change the curriculum, you have to go through the school board. For instance, my tribe would like to see Comanche history taught as a credit course in the public school attended by Comanche students. When you have to go through the board to make this happen, it becomes political. Indian people do not consider themselves to be part of this system and do not feel they can in any way have influence. So we need a mechanism to ensure that this can happen.

IV. Native Language and Culture

Problems and Concerns

- It is possible that Indian students are doing well in some public schools, but the question is by whose standards. If it is by the white standard and they are not doing well at the community level, then they may not be getting the cultural background they need. This is the reason people talk about the need for culturally relevant curriculum. We want our young people to grow up with a strong cultural identity so they can excel in any institution whether it is Indian or non-Indian.

- In the public schools you have a lot of non-Indians, and the non-Indian standards, curriculum, and social construction of reality are the norm. The Indian things only get added in; they are afterschool programs, pull-out programs, and afterthoughts.

- The weak point that many schools have is lack of curriculum that is relevant to Indian history and culture. Perhaps the curriculum development effort should come from the state level and be linked to competency testing for Indian students in these areas. This way Indian students could graduate at a level that will allow them to be productive citizens and pursue postsecondary training whether it be college, vocational school, or military service. Many times the state education departments are not supportive of the concept of developing this culturally relevant curriculum.

- I think one of the mistakes we make when we have Native American studies programs in colleges is to assume that those programs are there to teach Indians. They are not; they are there to teach white people about Indians. Taking the course does not make the person a Kiowa, Hoopa, or a Yurok. It just makes them a white person who has read some things about Indians. It is like basket making. My mother says this to me: "If you know how to make a basket, you know where to go for the materials, it doesn't make you a basket, it makes you a person who is knowledgeable about making baskets."

Ideally I would like to have my children have Hoopa teachers every year for all of their lives so they become well educated and well schooled. Then we would never lose the things that are unique about our culture. Nowadays instead of having a melting pot, we are "honoring everyone's diversity." But we are still looking for this sort of conglomerate American with Indians now contributing something.

The worst example I have seen was where they had listed all of the foods Indians ever contributed--corn, avocados, strawberries, and so forth--but they didn't have acorns. Now, acorns are a staple and very important to my tribe and my kids asked me why acorns weren't on the list. I said, "because they aren't important to white people." The teacher said that "only pigs and deer eat acorns." I have two children so this means that one of them must be pig and one must be a deer, because that is what we do.

Ideally, I'd have Hoopa teachers all of the time, but we also need Hoopa doctors. But instead of us filling in the regular program with Indians, I would like for us to be able to select the people we want and fill in with non-Indians who can help us interpret the society with which we must interact.

State and Local Initiatives

I have a child who attends a public school and another who attends the Santa Fe Indian School. I would like to add to earlier comments about the necessity for a strong curriculum that is based on Indian traditions and culture. I also think the beginning point is to ensure that state departments of education take an active role in pursuing this.

The State of New Mexico approved a policy in August 1986 that set educational standards and required local school districts to identify the educational needs of all Indian students. They also required local districts to include content and concepts from Indian cultures. This requires close coordination among school districts, tribal governments, parents, and the communities.

Taking this another step, more recently the state universities are introducing Navajo language teaching competencies. These steps are necessary if we want to build pride in the Indian kids who are going through our schools. They need to know a lot, not only about their culture, but also about the laws that govern them and their people. Merely asking a child, "What is Public Law 93-874?" is an important step. Most kids don't know the answer, although it strongly impacts their lives. This is now a question on the Santa Fe competency test.

In our public high school, which is off the reservation, we now offer Apache language and are told that it also satisfies the foreign language requirements for the state colleges and universities in Arizona. In all the years that Indian students have been going there, this is the first time we've been able to do this. We also are offering Apache history for the first time. So many of our problems relate back to lack of self-concept and low self-esteem because these kids do not know about themselves or where they come from. Apaches have their own "trail of tears," and when you teach this to students they are very awed by it. So we are going to be offering both Apache language and history to students at the elementary and junior high levels as well. We are hoping this will change things around.

If you are planning to go to college you must meet the foreign language requirements. Apache to us is not foreign, but I don't mind if they call it a foreign language, as long as the kids can benefit from taking it. They just don't know what else to call it. But this is an issue we need to take to the State Education Office. We say it is prestigious to know French, Spanish, or Russian, but it should be considered just as prestigious to know your own Native language.

V. Native American Teachers

Recognizing the Need for Native American Teachers

- One possible solution is to recruit more Native American teachers for the middle and high school levels in all courses. I just graduated my daughter, who in her whole lifetime of attending public school never had a Native teacher. My son is going through the system now and has had only one Native teacher.

  In looking at innovative approaches that will address recruitment of Native teachers we have found that as soon as we get them, they are recruited away to higher paying jobs. The public school systems and the tribal schools are having funding problems. But I really believe that teacher recruitment is a major issue.

  I also believe that effective teachers could be of any color if they really understand the culture. Perhaps this can be accomplished through exemplary teacher training programs.

- I direct the Indian teacher education program at Humboldt State University. I am also a member of the Hoopa Tribe's education committee and the parent of two enrolled Hoopa Tribal members.

  I think it is critically important to have Native teachers teaching in the classroom. It is not enough to train non-Indian teachers to know about and work with Indian children. We have to have people who not only serve as role models but are able to understand the educational systems that are operating within our tribes, so they can interact with schooling.

  At Hoopa we make a distinction between schooling and education. We have people who are educated as Hoopa people and yet are poorly schooled. We also have people who are very well schooled but are not very well educated; it is difficult to mesh the two things together.

  When you take non-Indian people and dip them in Indian culture, it does not give them the ability to interact with the parents, the committees, and the tribes. So we need to have Native people as teachers, but my concern is that this is almost impossible to achieve when there is no money to assure that Indian teacher candidates make it through school. We are now facing severe cutbacks and as funding for higher education shrinks, you will not have Indian teachers in the classroom.

- The need for Native American teachers is even more valid and critical in urban areas. We have mixed classrooms in California, and we are now facing a situation where we are running out of white people. By the year 2000 the majority of our classrooms will be non-white. It then becomes more important for Indian students to have an Indian person as a teacher at least some time in their lives.

Recruiting and Retaining Native American Teachers

- We have been trying to hire Indian educators in my school since I have been there. Right now we are looking for a high school guidance counselor and are offering $5000 above the regular salary as an incentive. In grades K through 6 we have about 80 percent Indian educators, but in grades 7 through 12, out of 15 teachers we have only one Indian educator. We have asked the community college to set up an inservice program for teachers in the fall. We did this last year and it is helping some, but I think the community colleges in Indian country should have done this for us a long time ago.

- I am the superintendent of schools at Sho-Ban School District in Fort Hall, Idaho. In order to have teacher and administrator retention we need to do more than just train our people, because if we do only this, they often leave for other jobs. We need to survey surrounding school districts and establish a pay scale that is based on an average, so we don't get robbed by the local school districts. I lost a terrific English teacher Monday and we are having a hard time replacing her.

  Another issue is retirement. We are BIA funded and do not have the resources to establish a retirement system within the BIA schools. This is a shame, because we are telling our teachers, administrators, and other staff members that we don't want them here for the long haul. "We are not planning for your retirement; this is simply a stopping ground for you."

  I would also like a place where we can advertise for teachers and administrators that are Native American. With the exception of special education, there is no place we can send off to in order to advertise and attract qualified Native Americans.

  We are currently fighting a public certification battle in my area. We have the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges that accredits us, so our teachers need to be certified with an Idaho Teaching Certificate in their subject areas. We have to comply or we lose accreditation and our diplomas will be useless for those kids who want to go on to college. This is important to us because even though we are a small school, three-fourths of our graduates last year went on to postsecondary education.

- Only about 5 percent of our teachers and staff are Native Americans. I worked in Montana one year with an Indian Teachers Training Program, and really, we can't train enough Indian teachers to fill the void. Often when we get Indians trained, if they have any potential at all, they are quickly lapped up by Indian Health Services or a neighboring school district. They are taken out of the classroom to head projects, become supervisors, program directors, and program coordinators. So we are training them for the classroom, but there is such an administrative void that we can't keep them. I agree that our first preference should be to train our own people for our classrooms and reservations, but I don't think we will ever be able to do it fast enough to meet the need. With this in mind, I believe we need to design some special program that will enable non-Indian people to work effectively with our children.

VI. Inadequate Funding and Substandard Facilities

- I blame the system for not meeting the needs of Indian kids. On the one hand they cut back the number of boarding schools in the United States and place students in public schools.

Then they cut back on funding for JOM and other programs that are supposed to meet the unique needs of Indian children. Then they ask us why the kids are dropping out. The reason is because the federal government has not upheld its responsibility. Our problem is that in the many years we have asked for support and the many times we have come lobbying Congress, we continue to suffer the same problems. Many of these problems are related to lack of financial support. A lot of the tribes suffer economically and cannot offer adequate programs without federal support.

- Our BIA school system includes many school buildings that are pathetic. Perhaps one or two new schools are built each year, usually for about $12 million allocated out of Office of Construction Management. Facilities management tells us that our buildings are decaying at the rate of $32 million per year, so we aren't even able to maintain what we have. We have one school that has an asbestos danger sign above it. When the inspector came in, plaster fell off the wall and hit him on the head. I mean, give us a break. We need some new facilities out there at the rate of at least five or ten per year, and we aren't getting them.

  We are charged with trying to bring our Indian students to an equal standing with public schools by the year 2000. We have started out at a lower standard as far as national standards are concerned, and we get less money with which to operate. In Idaho we are 48th or 49th in per pupil expenditure and the public schools have $500 more per pupil than our BIA school. How are we supposed to raise our level of achievement when we are underfunded and our facilities are grossly inadequate?

  This is a federal government system. They should try to make it a shining example to the public schools instead of the debacle we now have. As far as funding is concerned, it is a shame.

- Another issue is transportation. It cost us $4.40 per mile to operate our buses, and this was before the crisis in Iraq and the increase in gasoline prices. Yet we only get $1.17 per mile from the BIA.

VII. Boarding Schools versus Public Schools

- I am confused about the boarding school situation where kids are taken off the reservation and are taught primarily by non-Indians. Parents are not around, and the culture is not necessarily incorporated into the curriculum. Yet they appear to be having a higher success rate than some of the programs that do incorporate these elements that everyone believes are so important.

- When my school board members were growing up they went to boarding schools, as did other in the community, and they told me that they were successful because the teachers have control of the students for 24 hours a day and taught them how to be organized and disciplined.

- In a boarding school, you don't have to deal with the power relationships between non-Indian and Indian children because all of the children are Indian. You may have teachers who are not so competent and who know nothing about the curriculum, but there is no question about who takes priority because all of the students are Indian, and this creates a very positive force.

When you are in public schools the Judeo-Euro-Western culture is the norm and standard. Indian people are either pushed in or pulled out and it is a negative experience. I don't believe in forced segregation, but sometimes we have to segregate in order to save ourselves because the alternative to integration means total loss of who you are.

In a public school situation you have all these white kids--in our town we have the border town kids who get bused in to our school--yet we have nothing in the curriculum that is Indian. We are thinking of adopting a textbook that has been approved for use in California. I went to review it and it says that "The Kwakiutl Indians used to fish for salmon and they believe that if you skin the fish, take the meat out, eat it, and throw the bones back in, it will grow new meat and you will have a new fish." If I were a Kwakiutl, I would die to read this, but I'm not. Then it lists all of the food that the Shumash Indians eat--"clams and crabs." That is it, no other food. This is the kind of material they use.

Boarding schools do not use state-adopted texts. They have their problems, but that isn't one of them. There are negative and positive things about boarding schools. The reason we went with having the public school on my reservation--and my grandfather and father fought for it--was because they didn't want their children taken away from them. They wanted them to come home at night.

- I think you have to be very careful when you talk about boarding schools versus public schools because there is a continuum of differences among boarding schools. At one end you have the large residential boarding schools that may serve as many as 56 tribes. Students come to these schools and stay for nine months of the year with a two-week vacation at Christmas. This is very different from those schools where kids live in a boarding situation but go to a public school. Then you also have students who may only board two or three nights a week and go home on the weekends. There is such variety that it is difficult to discuss. Some boarding schools serve a real mono-cultural or mono-tribal situation.

I think that many kids seem to adapt to a boarding school situation as a part of the adolescent developmental process. Young people are naturally looking for a sense of identity. This is why I believe we need to toss out some of the ineffective crumbling parts of the system we adopted from non-Indian schools and make our own definitions of what meaningful education consists of for our children. I don't mean that meaningful education is a piece of paper you come out with. In my tribal history, I've never seen business cards printed by our older folk that say "Ace Warrior" or "Number One Grandmother." We didn't ever have that need for a piece of paper.

I work with adolescents in recovery, and they are looking for the meaning of questions like "Who am I? and How do I find my place in society?" They want to be known. We as human beings yearn to be known and yearn to know other people. So how are we going to provide an educational experience for those young people so that they truly begin to know who they are?

The only thing I can say about boarding school is that when you move someplace else, you leave your family and your reputation at home, and the new people you meet don't know your history. Sometimes these legacies are not very helpful. So when you go to a new setting, you can make a fresh start and be who you want to be. Then, if as staff we allow students an opportunity to get to know us on a personal relationship basis, we can help them succeed.

- I am Pima Tonautha (phonetic) from Tuscon, AZ, and I am a product of the Phoenix Indian Boarding School. I have to defend it because at the time I was going to school there were good teachers and good people to be around. There was no distinction between good staff and bad staff. We all just kind of had a sense of responsibility when we went to a boarding school.

We learned to do our own things and be responsible for ourselves. Vocational courses were offered and a lot of our men and women took them. For the men there was carpentry and masonry, so you could learn a trade, and when you graduated you pursued that type of work. At that time college was stressed, but not as much as it is now. A lot of the people with whom I went to school did very well. In fact, one of my classmates became superintendent of the Indian school after graduation.

I have seen public schools and I have gone to parochial schools--I never really stayed in any one school for any length of time. But learning from experience and living with white people as well as my own people and picking up the language from my grandparents, I feel very proud that I can pick and choose from either side.

I think it is entirely up to individuals to decide who or what they want to be. We can't stand here and say, "Well, you didn't have this or that, so therefore you haven't learned anything." I think everything is based on yourself.

- I am from the Pierre Indian Learning Center, which is a boarding school in South Dakota. One of the reasons I feel students do a little better in boarding school is because all of their physical, social, and emotional needs are taken care of in a boarding school. It is a very difficult job to try to meet these needs, and whether or not the students want us to or like the idea that we are trying, you know our number one priority is their needs--needs that probably would not have been addressed at home. Most of the kids that come to boarding school today are from dysfunctional families.

In boarding school we don't have truancy problems. We have a captive audience, kids have to go to school, and they go every day. Drug and substance abuse is not as high, and although we do have our problems, we have better control of them.

I have worked in a public school, a tribal school, and now a boarding school, and I have noticed a difference in the emphasis of teacher inservice and staff attitude. In the public schools the training sessions at the beginning of the year usually consist of outside experts coming in to tell you how to teach better and especially how to make your life easier. So the primary concern is what is best for the teachers. How can we improve our situation, our salaries, our rights? How can we strengthen our teacher organization so we will have more power? Very little concern is focused on commitment to the students. In a boarding school, I noticed that our inservice sessions are focused on how to best serve the students we will have and meet their needs. Very little attention is paid to salary because people know our financial situation and accept the fact that they are working for less money and have no retirement plans.

I guess you could say that boarding school staff is more of a closely knit family. This includes residential case workers, dorm parents, teachers, administrators, and the school board. We are all a family committed to serving the kids that are sent to us.

- I am from Flagstaff, AZ, and I would like to talk about the BIA peripheral dormitory programs. I live on the Navajo Reservation in a community they call Dilkon, and when I entered school at the age of six, I went to a BIA boarding school. Then when I entered sixth grade, I went to Winslow Public Schools while staying at the BIA peripheral dormitory. I graduated from there in 1972, and while at this school I experienced many things that I still value very strongly in my life. I am now 36 years old. I attended Northern Arizona University (NAU) and earned a masters degree in educational administration two years ago. Currently I am working on my doctorate at NAU.

The BIA dormitories that are currently in operation were constructed in the 1950s. There are several of them around the Navajo Reservations in the outlying border town regions. I have gone back to visit some of these locations in my work with education and they are in a very poor state. The facilities are very run down. The furnishings and services are substandard, and the personnel are uneducated and poorly trained for working with these kids.

I believe very strongly that the education my friends, relatives, and I received was the best, and many of us went on to higher education. By living at the BIA dormitory and going to a local public school, we were able to compete with other ethnic groups. We were brought in from the reservation and lived in the dorms Monday through Friday. Most of us went home for the weekends, so we had the best of both worlds. We maintained close ties with our people, our culture, our religion and history, yet we were in a competitive multicultural school Monday through Friday. I feel that this is the type of education students need today to survive.

I therefore support the notion of giving attention to these BIA dormitories because it would be worthwhile in the long run. Although there are now high schools on the Navajo Reservation, there are still students who need to be able to stay in the dormitories to attend the public high schools.

I am principal and superintendent of Chemawa Indian School, which is an off-reservation boarding school in Salem, Oregon. I would like to see the BIA take a good look at the off-reservation boarding school programs and at boarding schools in general. In 1969 when the Kennedy Report was issued, it talked about the atrocities in Indian education. There was an accompanying report entitled "Compendium of Federal Boarding Schools," and that particular report addressed all of the inequities throughout the boarding school system and its failure to really meet the needs of children. Now we have a number of children coming to boarding schools with some very special and unique needs. Yet the BIA and the Office of Indian Education have never really designed a special program for boarding school children. We need a program that will address their academic needs and also their social, emotional, and mental health needs.

We have found that students often use drugs and alcohol to medicate a lot of underlying problems they have. Drugs and alcohol are a very big problem. We are attempting to build a program to address those needs, but we have very, very inadequate funding. I have seen children come into my school heavily under the influence and using and abusing drugs and alcohol. You almost want to wring their necks and throw them out. But we have developed a strong intervention program and I have seen almost miraculous situations with these kids' lives turned around. We have succeeded in getting some bright, good looking, and intelligent kids off drugs and alcohol. Many times when we get them to sober up we find they have been medicating a sexual abuse, child abuse, or physical abuse problem.

I think that if you study and compare Bureau boarding schools to other residential child care facilities you will find that BIA schools are severely underfunded; as a consequence, many kids suffer because their needs in the social, emotional, and mental health areas are not addressed.

I believe that the Bureau has failed and is continuing to fail to provide an Indian or boarding school office that would do nothing but work with boarding schools.

Boarding schools need more counselors, social workers, and mental health workers to work with kids. You can't always get a child to perform or concentrate on academics when he or she is troubled by heavier burdens. Students need to be able to address their emotional needs before they can concentrate on getting an A in geometry or biology.

Another problem which reflects oversight on the BIA's part is the lack of training for dormitory personnel. This is a very important position yet the standards are minimal. You have to be able to read and write, you don't even need to have a high school diploma. We have many fine people that do a good job, but there is a serious lack of training for these staff. We are asking these people to work with kids who have many complex problems; without training, this is aking too much.

- I do not have good data on our dropouts and graduates. When I first came to Chemawa, the administration and student control were so messed up that it has taken us four or five years to get things under control. We had a number of staff who were also abusing alcohol and drugs. We either had to get them into treatment or ask them to leave. So it has taken a while to establish a firm administrative system. We also weren't collecting any data when I first came. We have been doing that more recently and I would be happy to provide some of the studies we have done. I can say that in the last couple of years about 80 percent of our high school seniors have graduated and either gone on to a tribally controlled college, a vocational school, or to the military. A few have gone to college.

Unfortunately, we haven't developed a good tracking system to follow them after they leave Chemawa, although we are talking about starting that process this year. We would like to write to all of the students who have graduated from Chemawa in the past eight years and find out what they are now doing.

VIII. Postsecondary Planning & Career Aspirations

College Versus Vocational Tracks

- Our high school offers three options for a diploma: college preparatory, a standard diploma, and a vocational diploma. The decision of which to pursue ideally belongs to the student; however, sometimes counselors will look at a student's scores and advise students to go for the vocational diploma strictly on the basis of low scores. Based on personal experience, I think that is wrong. I went to a parochial high school and was one of a graduating class of eight. I went to the BIA officer for advice and to see if I could get a grant. He looked at my scores and said, "Well, your scores are very low, and I don't think you can do it. I think you should just go to vocational school because you are very fast with your hands. There is a difference." To this day I remember how he sat across the table and looked at me and told me I was low. It did a lot of damage to me. But I am glad to say that I have worked hard and I just completed my masters degree at an Arizona university and plan to go on for certification in educational administration.

One of the problems that I found in my years in higher education is that we depend too much on test scores. We do not have a way of measuring motivation, incentive, or desire -- all of the things that go into making someone a success. We don't take these things into account.

- I was given similar advice when I was in junior high school. I was told I should be a carpenter because I could work well with my hands.

- Do we need more funds for vocational education in general, or do we need to divide the emphasis we now have in schools so that it also includes more vocational education? For instance, 65 to 70 percent of the jobs that are out there do not require four years of college, yet most high schools are college preparatory. Do you think we should design a curriculum that would prepare more students for those non-college prerequisite jobs?

- I can see both sides of this fence. As a former board chairman for a BIA contract school and current board chairman of a public school, I must say that I would never go back to the BIA if they paid me a million dollars. I think these kinds of decisions should be left up to local control. We know through our own data and needs assessments that vocational training is one of the areas our students need. Our school board and community can decide what types of vocational education should be emphasized.

  I think that the Indian schools will need the dollars to provide strong curriculum. The actual curriculum should be left to local control. No one particular national formula would work for Indian country; the needs vary from one region to another. In our region energy development (oil and gas), agriculture, and light industry are the main things.

- One part of me believes that all Indian students should go to college, but I know that this is not true. There need to be more federal funds made available for vocational technologies.

- Our students need about a year of preparation before they can go into a regular college and make it. If they go directly, about 80 percent of them fail. This is partly due to the alcoholism and poor attendance on the reservation.

Entrepreneurship Initiative

- I am principal at Crazy Horse High School on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. I gave some testimony yesterday about some of the things we are doing with cooperative learning, integrated curriculum, and outcome- based curriculum especially in the 9-12 language arts, social studies areas. Another area we have integrated is the entrepreneurship program we are using. It is based on a curriculum in South Dakota entitled "Rural Schools and Community Development," and it is being implemented both on and off the reservation across the state. This is important because small communities are losing much of their resources when their children leave as adults.

  We are especially concerned about this on the reservation, so we have a hands-on curriculum whereby students participate in developing a business idea, producing a business plan, and implementing it with the intent of generating income. First they survey the community to discover discretionary income and service needs. They look for a way to service the community in an area not presently covered by other businesses. We are training our teachers to work with this program and we are bringing in successful businessmen (especially Indian businessmen) as role models. Then when the students are seniors, if their business is successful, they can sell it to younger students or maintain it themselves.

IX. Problems Sharing Innovative Curriculum

- I would like to talk about the use of the hands in terms of curriculum development for math and science. For the past 11 years I have taught a high school course in New York Public Schools with a strategy I developed that uses string figures as a mathematical learning tool. It is a wonderful course, and I deal with students (not Indian students) who are "damaged" or cannot do regular math. The strategy I use addresses all the issues of manipulation as a method of learning, and kids really do well with it.

I know that my system of instruction works. I have tried to get people to listen to me, but I find it very difficult to get through the bureaucracy. People tend to listen politely to the idea and then shove it aside. Last fall, for example, I went to Anchorage to give a presentation. First I was invited to Washington, DC, for lunch with the acting director of Elementary and Secondary Education. I had to plead sick at school because as a teacher they wouldn't let me go under any other circumstances. So I flew to Washington and met with this man for lunch. He was very taken with my ideas, but he said he couldn't do anything for me, that I would have to fight my way through the bureaucracy for three or four years and prove my determination, and then someone might listen. He did offer to have Neil Shedd, who was then acting director of Indian Education, come to see my presentation in Anchorage. Shedd was very taken with my approach, but now he is gone. I also approached the National Science Foundation, and they said they liked the idea too, but couldn't help me.

So I am floundering down here. I have an approach, I know it works, and it is cheap. It is pan-Indian, meaning that all Indian cultures have string figures. I have made a video tape and my idea now is to send this out to anyone who is interested (I now have requests from 30 sites). They can watch my hands and then get started. I have made it so you can begin by learning one figure and then by small manipulations you can make literally millions of figures. My students raised their grades 15 to 20 points across the board, because it empowers them to learn.

I am also the chairperson of the Title V parents' committee in New York City and am responsible for outreach to the Indian population. However, we have difficulty finding them because the board of education doesn't help us locate them.

X. A Time for Change

- I'm not sure where these hearings are going, but I hope that this message is sent from Washington, DC, to schools that they must "Stop doing what they are doing!" In other words, if your school has not shown any improvement in the last five years regarding attendance, achievement scores, and graduation rates of Indian students, it is time to stop doing what you are doing right now, and do something different. As Mark Twain once said, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again, but don't be a damn fool about it." I think in Indian education there have been a lot of damn fools in the last 50 to 60 years who have tried to do something but really haven't had any effective results.

- In terms of what different things might be done, we have a lot of models of what not to do. Basically we do not want to do what the big, mostly white high school down the road is doing. Indian schools have been trying that approach for 20 or 30 years and it hasn't worked.

  We should look at schools in the U.S. and Canada that currently serve large populations of Indians and have shown increases in graduation rates, attendance, and achievement scores. Find out what they are doing that is working and assemble a composite picture of a model school that can be a shining star to Indian education. We could have a network of Indian schools across the U.S. and Canada that we can say are really making a difference in kids' lives. This is important because right now there are no particular schools we know of that are graduating 100 percent of their students and sending them all on to college.

My main concern as a tribal leader is assuming responsibility for the well-being of my people, whether it is in education, social services, health, or whatever. This Task Force was created to seek information and data and take it back to Washington, DC, because as Indian people we are still testifying and crying about the same problems we have identified 10 or 12 years ago, and nobody is listening.

This year a symposium was held at Brigham Young University where the Assistant Secretary of the Interior, Dr. Brown, quoted statements from President Bush and Secretary Lujan. Their agenda says, "We are committed to making ideas of Native American self-government and self-determination a reality. We will work with Native Americans to promote economic development, improve educational opportunities, and pursue other measures to enhance their quality of life." But how many times have we heard these kinds of words? We have heard them many, many, many times from Washington, but nothing has been done.

My plea here is that you take whatever you gather here back to Washington and let those people that are supposed to make this a reality understand that we are not crying wolf. We need to have things done. If we don't get them done in this generation we are going to fail. I will have failed my people and my responsibility, and you will have failed to do the work you set out to accomplish. It is important that we not fail now, because if we do, it may be too late.

Too often our young people go off in a different direction and lose their identity. I think you hold the destiny of our children in your hands. It is time to hold these people to their promises. They told us we were going to get good educational opportunities, so let's get this done.

INAR/NACIE Joint Issues Sessions
NIEA 22nd Annual Conference - San Diego, California
October 15, 1990

"Education of Exceptional Children"

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Summary: "Education of Exceptional Children"

The first session on Education of Exceptional Children was co-hosted by INAR Task Force Co-Chair Terrel Bell and NACIE Council member Andrea Barlow. The second session on this issue was co-hosted by INAR Task Force member Hayes Lewis and NACIE Council member Margaret Nelson. The following issues, programs, and recommendations were discussed:

I. Overview of the Issues

- On the topic of education for exceptional Indian children there are many issues and concerns both in the tribal schools and in public schools. This is an area that has been virtually ignored in many school systems.

- In special education, one of the issues the Task Force has been hearing around the country is that the screening and assessment in order to place kids is inappropriate. We have heard that students with a variety of learning disabilities that might not have been special education in nature are erroneously placed in special education programs. Some of the problems are related to assessment instruments and some are related to language differences.

  We have also heard that there is a lack of training for special education people and a lack of training for parents in terms of their rights and responsibilities. We have heard a number of presentations about problems associated with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Fetal Alcohol Effect and their impact on school systems. In New Mexico, for example, the State Legislature had to fund preschool programs for three- and four-year-olds with a variety of disabilities and some of them are now coming out of the alcoholism of their parent during pregnancy.

  We have heard about the need for referral services and appropriate programs to meet the Native students' needs related to problems rooted in behavioral, cultural, or limited English proficiency and the need for periodic re-evaluation or testing to reconfirm earlier diagnosis.

  In terms of gifted and talented we are looking at models that really consider the special needs of Native Americans and Alaska Natives.

II. Gifted and Talented

Problems and Issues

- We need to have more Native American kids in these gifted programs, because people need to understand that we are not always in resource or special education classes. They have many ways to classify us as needing special education, but not very many ways to classify us as gifted and talented.

- I am from Santa Fe Public School District, and as an educator and as a parent of two gifted children, my own experience was that no services were available 12 or 13 years ago when my children were first identified as gifted. My oldest is a senior this year, but I noticed when he was little that he was reading way above his grade level. At five years old he was reading at second grade level. I went to the school and they could not provide him with any services. It is frustrating for any parent to see that their child's needs are not being met by the school. Finally, I determined to pay for my own children's education and sent them to a prep school. So I ended up paying out of my own pocket for services that should have been provided by the public school.

- When I grew up the rule was, "Do as I say, not as I do." This doesn't work for these young people of today. So I feel it is vital to have programs to serve our Indian gifted children. Everyone thinks of Indian children as needing remedial kinds of programs. My son can do his math in front of the television watching cartoons and get it done very well. Many Indian people are gifted and should be acknowledged as such.

- Some kids are criticized by their teachers for "not paying attention," or "messing around." When my son was in third grade his teacher complained of this and said that he just doodled. He took a math test, and when he did well and didn't turn in a scratch paper, the teacher accused him of cheating. I told him to go back to school and tell the teacher to give him the test again. So he did and she gave him the test three times because she couldn't believe that he could work the answers in his head. She said that she couldn't work them without writing them out, but she did find out that he really had been listening. So from then on she let him doodle because she knew that he was listening. However, she said, "I don't know how to say he is gifted." And I thought to myself, "You're in a public school and you don't know how to say he's gifted?"

He is also very talented in art. But what do you do when a teacher gives your child a D or an F. Her reason was that he didn't turn in all of his assignments. I questioned her and found out that he was turning in exactly what she had asked for, but she felt he was just sitting there and wasn't listening. But to give him an F? He knows he can draw. He won first prize in kindergarten and had his picture at the bank; he won first place in an art sculpture contest in sixth grade. He is talented and even did the cover for the yearbook. But his art teacher gave him an F.

- How do we keep identified gifted children engaged in classrooms where they are turned off by teachers who use processes designed to serve the slowest students in their classrooms? How can they possibly fully utilize their potential in these situations? I am of the opinion that what often happens with these kinds of government programs in Bureau schools, and almost everywhere, is that they are an afterthought and their implementation is based on availability of money. It is currently fashionable or in vogue for Indian people to be identified as being gifted.

- You know as parents we need to encourage our children because sometimes if you look at giftedness only in the school system, then what can happen is that system itself can create problems. If they have a program for gifted students, it is often a pull-out program where kids are taken out of the regular classroom when actually all kids need to be working together cooperatively, so everyone is sharing their gifts.

Schools don't seem to have ways to identify different kinds of giftedness. They often only have two that they concentrate on, like verbalization and math, or art and music. In some programs for Indians there are survival skill giftedness and spiritual giftedness.

- I agree that it is really important to develop strategies that will impact children in the regular program. There is a tendency to pull out or segregate Indian students, but if these special programs include good practices for one group of children, why couldn't they be applied to all?

- I am a school board member in the White Shield School District in northwestern North Dakota. Our school serves about 156 students in grades K through 12. We have a gifted and talented program that we began implementing last year. The district advertised for people to nominate children into the program, but the problem is that a lot of parents and community members don't have any idea about gifted and talented youth. We know there are such children around, but for all these years we have been focusing on those children who are underachievers, handicapped, and so forth. The gifted kids have never received any attention or been encouraged to fully develop their talents.

This is really sad because I had children and grandchildren who were really gifted. At one time they brought home a lot of high marks from school, but they learned that if they were good achievers they would be harassed at school, so they didn't want their peers to know about their good grades. The school talks about this, but they don't know what to do about it. There should be something we could do to stop this trend and turn these other kids around. Some parents, who had money or were in education and knew their child was gifted, would pull the children out of the school and send them to a white school.

I have raised four grandchildren and they were all gifted and talented. They came to me when they were 6, 7, 8, and 9, and they had real good grades. But the oldest, who was in fourth grade, was so bored in school that he didn't do anything. He said everything they were studying he had done before. It did him a lot of damage. He graduated from White Shield High School and he hardly ever did his work, so he was really spoiled. He would never do his homework, but then he would take the test and get a good grade. After high school he went into the Marine Corps.

My second granddaughter had straight As. She had some better teachers and they helped her out by giving her other things to do. So right now she is at the University of North Dakota. The next one is in the gifted program now.

- I am from the Billings Area Education Office. Working with gifted and talented programs is one of the "hats" I recently picked up. One of the things lacking in our area are the resources for assessments at the local level. We have three very small schools ranging in enrollment from 75 to 300 students. We don't have the additional resources from the Bureau's formula to go out and buy all of those expensive tests. I would like to see where we can go to get these resources without having to dig so deep financially.

- A problem with pulling out gifted kids is that this may place additional stresses on the children themselves. There may be parental and teacher pressure, and the testing process itself is rigorous. Then if you go through all of this and you fail, it is really going to affect your self-esteem.

- I would agree that it is a real challenge for students, and I think we need to help them see it as a challenge with themselves rather than a competition with other students. Perhaps that would be an incentive for them to be involved and it would produce less stress. It certainly can cause a lot of stress if they are not ready for it or if it isn't something they want. But we do need to get as many as we can involved in GATE programs and we need more role models.

- From a student perspective, my kids often ask, "Why should I work harder to get an A when Joe or someone else can easily get an A in the regular class?" That is a very interesting question, because probably everyone should have an IEP even though the teachers say it is too much paperwork. But this would mean that someone has to monitor it, and no one likes to be told what to do, including teachers.

- As a member of a parent committee with the public schools, I have worked with Title IV, Title V, and JOM. One of the things I have found is that schools get a regular allotment for each student and then more money for special kids. This is an incentive to identify more students as gifted. We need to see what motives schools have in identifying kids for special programs. This is especially important when we know that 80 percent of Indian kids are going to public schools. Because if schools go out and rambunctiously grab all of these kids and identify them as gifted and then do not develop IEPs or try meet their special needs, we will have created a monster.

- In New Mexico the funding formula for public schools does include an additional weighted factor for special education gifted students. But here again, the standards used for eligibility are geared to only one definition of gifted and talented. If your students don't meet those criteria, you won't get the money. So there is automatically no risk of overidentification for these programs.

Assessment Issues

- I have a concern with Section 4 of the new gifted and talented guidelines. This is the "high potential" area. Sections 1 and 2 say that a child must score either in the 95th or 98th percentile on a standardized test or an IQ test. I don't believe that anyone in this room would be surprised to learn that those tests were not written for Indian children and not standardized for them. The assessment process of allowing our students to participate in the gifted and talented program would be laughable except that they are hurting our children by keeping them out.

We should have someone in the Indian Education Office who is concerned and knowledgeable about Indian education. They should not just be selecting a test that is used for white kids and bringing it out to an Indian boarding school. We need to fund a research project on how to best assess academic potential and recognize giftedness among Indian children--perhaps at a boarding school like Sherman Indian High School here at Riverside that has ties to the local universities.

- One of the problems brought up by people in Albuquerque regarding the identification of GATE students was that use of the IQ test would eliminate minority students. But as I recall, after the program was instituted, minority participation went up, rather than down.

- Although we agree that many Indian children are gifted, there are different models out there to recognize different areas of giftedness. It doesn't just depend on the IQ scores or test data. There are models of effective programs in Indian communities throughout the United States, but they are isolated. So they need support and recognition.

There is a program called the Renzuli Enrichment Triad Model out of the University of Connecticut that is very compatible with a number of ways that Indian people look at giftedness. The model assumes that every person is gifted, but in different areas and at different levels.

There are also other models that look at bilingual or bicultural kinds of giftedness that might be more appropriate to use rather than the strictly academic Anglo model that one finds used by many school systems. American Indian Research and Development, Inc. of Norman, OK, has developed a program that examines kinds of models that could be useful for Indian communities as they develop enrichment programs and programs for their gifted and talented children.

As we look at the needs of exceptional children, we need to take an almost holistic view and not be bound to one methodology or another. We must be willing to try to develop these kinds of programs and opportunities for students.

Programs and Strategies

- I was on the parent committee at Albuquerque Public Schools several years ago. At that time the district served 86,000 students, of whom about 3.3 percent were American Indian. Albuquerque has had an active GATE program for about 16 years now. They hold all kinds of workshops and have guest speakers in and so forth. As a parent of two gifted children, I know they can be easily distracted. To keep them on task, you have to provide programs that are very interesting. I think we should look at programs that work, such as the one in Albuquerque, rather than try to create something entirely new.

- I work at the University of California at Irvine and am currently on leave at Sherman Indian High School. During a summer program that was for gifted and talented at the university, three of us faculty members ran a guilt-trip on the university people asking, "What have you done for Indians and Indian children? We need to be involved in this and we need to bring in Indian students." So they brought in children from six other schools.

By these assessment guidelines--which are invalid to begin with--86 percent of our Indian students score in the lowest quartile. Yet I took 48 Sherman students to the university to participate in the summer GATE program. One of the college professors said, "Students can only participate in this if they are gifted and talented." So all of our Indian students go real bright-eyed, you know, and they said, "Oh, wow, you know, we're in the gifted and talented program now."

In the competition with the six other schools, our students scored second in the day's activities and they had not even had chemistry, biology lab, or many experiences the other students had. But the potential was there, and just the idea that they were in that environment and people were looking at them as if they belonged there raised their level of capability, and they won the second day's competition.

So you see, that is what labels will do for you. And just as that label is so powerful to help you, other labels can be equally powerful to hurt you. So I think we have used the negative labels long enough.

- I am from an area in the San Bernardino mountains. I consider a lot of children in our reservation to be gifted and talented. There are children who are artistic, exceptional leaders, etc., and they don't ever get any recognition in the public school. All of the kids who are in the GATE program are children of teachers and businessmen. The same is true for the football team in our local high school.

My daughter started high school in our area last year and tried out for the volleyball team. She was very excited about going until about two weeks into the school year. She thought she had made the team and was happy and excited. She got the uniform and played in a game, and the next day the coach took it from her and told her she had no potential. That was the worst thing that ever happened to her. It almost destroyed her. I said, "How can they let a person work with children who would say a child has no potential?" Well, she immediately did not want to go to that school. Her brothers had been to Sherman and so she wanted to go there. So within two days, I had faxed her application down there and she was accepted. Since she has been at Sherman, she has been identified for the GATE program and was on the Honor Roll all four semesters last year. She went to U.C. Irvine's program this summer and was so happy.

The other day we picked her up for homecoming and she had called all around to area florists because the school had given her $15 to buy flowers for the homecoming queen and seven princesses. She said, "A lot of these people don't like Indians." She finally found a florist who donated a dozen red roses, a half dozen white roses for two runner-ups, and carnations for the rest. She was so happy and said, "I feel so good about myself!"

So Sherman has really been good for her. I am proud of the direction this school has taken in creating a new path for Native American children to follow and in recognizing their gifts and talents.

Parental Influence and Involvement

- I have two sons who are gifted. I think all parents probably believe that their children are gifted and if they don't, they should start thinking that way. Parents who believe this can encourage those strengths their children have and help them develop their talents. It doesn't have to come only from the school and other people.

- I have been reading the research on what causes students to do exceptionally well in school and have recently read a book by Dr. Guy Odom in Houston. He points to the mother as the most influential factor and says that if the mother has a dominant personality and is strong willed, the child is going to do well in school. Does this have any bearing on the experiences of Indian children?

- It sounds like the control group may have been in the majority society. I have raised six grandchildren. Those kids were never with the mother because of her problems with drugs and alcohol. So the influential factors for them were between foster homes and grandmother. But, you know, the minute they are born, they start learning stuff. I got them when the little guy was three years old. So there were three of the most influential years when they had other experiences. I had goals for the children that worked and they had good grades and did really well in school.

- I have an example. I happen to have been at the same job for quite a while now, and when I first got the job--teaching in the Indian Studies Department--a mother came and began school because her daughter was just not directed. So she said, "Let's me and you both go to school." Also when the daughter would act up, the grandmother would come and sit, so the daughter would behave, because the mother did not have that much control. Now that young girl is grown up and she has a son. I was talking to her mother the other day and she says that now she goes over to sit with her grandson, Devin, because he won't listen to his mother.

- I know of students who are gifted and talented people and live in a dysfunctional home all their lives. They still come out of there and earn a doctorate in education. I don't know how they learned the moral part and the values coming out of that setting, but somehow they were determined to get out of that place and they were determined to get a good education.

- One woman friend went to Adult Children of Alcoholics, and she is finally learning to cope and to live her life and to take a look at where she came from. It is not only Indian families that are dysfunctional, but when you take the dominant society and run a test on them, it has nothing to do with how our people are.

- The parents should be educated to know more about gifted and talented children and to know what they are doing in the program and how they can help.

III. Handicapped and Learning Disabled

Problems and Issues

- There are other kinds of exceptional children other than gifted and talented. I grew up on the reservation in the State of Washington several years ago--I have a lot of gray hair now. But in those days it was kind of a mill, where they brought Indian kids and then pushed them out at the end. My brother was dyslexic and he was what we call "dumb Tom." He still has these problems. But 30 years ago teachers identified him as a problem and set him on the side so they could teach to the rest of the kids. They promoted him socially, and this was very bad.

  There is no excuse for this nowadays; yet I was on the reservation in Nebraska two years ago and saw that the same kind of thing was still taking place. Teachers who are certified in the state should not look at these kids as problems; they should have a professional view and try to do a professional job of serving their needs. So I am very concerned about the problem with pushouts. People also say that the reservation only attracts marginal teachers, and this also needs to be examined.

- For about 95 percent of my career I have been working on the Navajo and Gila River Reservations, and I just moved into the public school for the first time. I find it a lot more structured than the BIA and tribal schools. My main concern is about the Indians themselves labeling students. When I was on the Navajo Reservation, when they found kids who were having trouble or had discipline problems, they would immediately refer them to special education. I am totally against that. Another problem with the BIA is that the paperwork is horrendous, especially filling out the IEPs. It is just too much and it takes away all your quality time with the children.

- It also makes me angry when I find Indian teachers who don't want to deal with the students in their classrooms, but just want to get rid of them. They see that as the easy way out. I am a special educator, and I am struggling to keep those students in the classes.

  On the reservation they segregate the students in the buildings. They keep them in the background. I have also taught at Hunters Point Boarding School. My mother is a Chapter 1 reading specialist. Her kids are not even in the classrooms. They are kept in the dorms and that is where she teaches. Her classroom is very tiny. At Gila River Day School the special education program was segregated in a very tiny classroom and you felt as if you were an alien. I was treated like a wall, with no respect at all--people just passed me by.

Assessment Issues

- One of the areas of concern that was identified in other hearings was that Native American kids seem to be identified for special education without any real criteria other than their problems with the English language. Language assessments of different kinds are really needed for use with Native students in order to distinguish between language problems and learning deficits.

- In Alaska, English is now the dominant language for most families. But some Eskimo groups and people farther north are less acculturated. They live out in remote areas in the bush. They still have their language and it is pretty strong. Even in Southeast Alaska among the Tlingit, they are finding that there is still a dialect. The difference in dialect between people in the village and those in town is further emphasized by differing speech patterns. Even people who have learned English often use their Native thought processes and formulate their speech accordingly. So many kids in Alaska have been identified as having speech problems when, in fact, it is really just a dialect problem. Speech therapists have indicated that there is no good way for them to tell the difference between dialect and speech problems. So they are looking for answers and for help. They are conscientious and don't feel good about seeing kids who don't really belong in there.

- My daughter was placed in special education because they thought she had a speech problem. When she was 17 she asked if she could take the test to see if she could graduate, and she scored above average. So there needs to be a better way of screening and testing kids to identify them for these programs. Also, a lot of the counselors and teachers make referrals but won't test kids to be certain. This is bad because some of these kids could do so much better, but they aren't given the chance.

- They ought to do placement tests periodically to be sure that kids are placed at the proper levels because some of them may have been held back due to excessive absences or problems with their family situation. They are actually smart but they are being held back.

- I think that those assessments teachers use in their classrooms are really a form of control or discipline. If you don't do all of the things that the teacher wants you to do, yet you are capable of absorbing the information, comprehending it, and doing well, then that suggests there should be some alternative assessment to measure that competence or mastery.

- One of the things that happens in the Juneau School District is that kids I work with can test very high on standardized and IQ tests in the early grades, but after a few years things start to happen. A lot of it has to do with social issues like drugs, alcohol, economics, and lack of parental support. So when they get into fourth, fifth, and sixth grades where they need even more support, they begin to lose interest and fall behind. The schools are usually too big to provide any kind of support for them. When schools and classes are smaller, teachers can have more time to give students the support and encouragement that they may not get at home. Then they may have a better chance of staying in school longer. This is what happened to me. I didn't get support at home, but because I went to a small school, I got some support there and made it through fine.

- On the Navajo Reservation I know many kids were put in special education because of standardized testing that did not take into consideration the living situations of their families. There are still many families on the reservation who do not have running water and electricity. How do you explain the use of a refrigerator to five-year-old children who have never had one in their home? They don't even know what an ice cube tray is, and yet these things are on the test.

My mother and I talked just this past weekend and I asked how her students fared on the CTBS. She said, "How would you figure this one child who scored exceptionally high, in the 90th percentile, but can't read at all?" What kids do is make pretty patterns. Some go straight down on one side or the other; other students make zig zags. They don't understand testing, so what can you do?

So when it comes to assessment for placement in special education, we need more than just standardized tests. We need parental and teacher feedback. Principals need to get out into the classrooms and observe kids instead of sitting in their offices. We also need to have better qualified teachers. Even when you have established procedures, they are often bypassed because no one is monitoring.

- When you get a child in special education, you realize that you are going to help that child, but you also have to look at the long-term effect of the child's placement in your program. I have a student right now in the Phoenix Union High School District, who has been learning disabled throughout her entire 17 years of schooling. However, she has been put in classes for "Trainable Mentally Handicapped" (TMH) and she has picked up those characteristics. They just recently re-evaluated her and found she was LD, so she is now facing a serious crisis and she is an alcoholic.

I am fighting with the tribe, the state, and the school to get her moved into a residential home. The tribe doesn't want to bother with her because she lives in the urban area. The state doesn't want to bother with her because she belongs to the Navajo Tribe. The school district won't pay because they feel it is the tribe's responsibility. I go back to the tribe and I am running around in circles. How am I going to get this girl into residential treatment?

- In the case of this girl who was misdiagnosed as TMH, there is really no argument that the total responsibility and liability rest with the school district. Parental and student legal rights should be clear in this case. If that child were in our district and we couldn't provide the appropriate services, we would have to place the child where she could get the services she required. If we were unwilling or unable to pursue that course, then there would be legal recourse that the parents could pursue to require us to pay for those costs and also for any kind of ancillary services for assessment or other things needed by that child.

The special education laws are probably the most controlled areas of the school system, and if you follow them you can stay out of trouble. They also assure that children will get the kinds of services they deserve and need.

- I think this one particular girl has chosen a career for me. Next year I am quitting work and I'm going to go into law. When I finish, I am coming back to the reservation and start legal procedures and litigation against those who are not serving Indian students properly.

Programs and Strategies that Work

- I have taught at the University of Oklahoma for 21 years and I know that we welcome handicapped and special needs students, as do other universities. We have a mandate that they must be educated the same as other students and this sometimes does create special problems for the professor or the teacher. For instance, they must decide what to do for students who cannot complete a test in the allotted 50-minute time period. However, if handicapped students go to their professors and explain their needs, almost without exception they will be given additional time. The teacher just has to know the problem.

I had a colleague who had a student last summer who could not write or speak. How do you test this kind of student? He was there and could listen and participate mentally, but my friend was very puzzled about how to evaluate him. He had a tutor and an assistant, but the teacher was not sure how to judge whether the answers he gave were his own or the tutor's.

- I work for the University of California at Berkeley. We have a special program for handicapped and disabled people. Students with special needs just have to go to the disabled center on campus and they are given someone to take notes, or to assist them in their living. A student is assigned to them either as a volunteer or for credit. They get registered and they can also take a note to the professor of any class they attend and they will be given extra time to take tests or other considerations they may need. We had one students who couldn't write or speak and was dyslexic, so he was provided with a computer to help him get through school. Others have electronic equipment that allows them to spell out an answer. It takes a long time and sometimes the professor will revise the test questions.

- Handicapped youngsters in elementary, junior high, and high school are often assigned peer helpers to take them around to their classes. This is a valuable experience for both students.

- In our special education programs at Zuni, we use the elderly citizens from a senior citizens' center to come in and provide assistance to the teacher in the classroom. I think they bring a humanizing perspective that is slightly different based on their age and life experiences. They also have a real calming effect on hyperactive kids or those who are severely disabled in other ways. So there are many resources we can use to help our exceptional kids.

- I worked for about seven years on the Gila River Indian Reservation which is the Pima Reservation. Their program is one I would call a model program that people could look at. The director, Cecilia Braun, is excellent. Her program serves the entire reservation and is staffed with psychologists, a speech pathologist, a special educator, and other community people who work as paraprofessionals. We provided whatever services or help a child needed. We even brought in people from Phoenix.

Parental Involvement

- Another concern I have is that the parent or the parent designee be involved in the IEP process at the boarding school site. There are no funds for parents to travel in and out to participate in the IEP process. So I want it to be published in everything going to the family so that the parents can designate a representative to speak on behalf of the child's best interests. They can ask the child who they would like to speak for them, because sometimes the school will make the choice. But if the parent could talk to the child and say, "Okay, you are going to have a hearing or a meeting, and I can't be there. So who at the school would you like to come in and be the parent designee? I will call the school and name that person."

  I also believe that our parents need to be educated clearly about their roles, because parent involvement in the IEP is basic to everything.

- I am in special education and I work with a lot of non-Indians. One of the areas I hope you will include is advocacy for parents and children locally. In our area we have advocates, but most are non-Indians. When our Indian people have problems with the system it is almost as if they advise us not to tell these parents exactly what they can get. They give parents a thick booklet with all of this formal language and tell them that it explains what is available.

- Often in our area Indian kids are put in special education classes because of speech and language problems. Our community is English speaking--in fact, not many people speak Mandan any more because it is almost dead, and there are only about five people left who know it. But still they don't have this trust. We are a small group and many of our people don't trust the non-Indian, so they want to depend on an Indian person to be their advocate.

If we could develop training programs for our Indian parents to help them be better advocates for their children, it would be really helpful.

- When you talk about the multidisciplinary team coming in to make up the IEP, that is just a farce. I never see that. You bring in the teachers, the principal, and the parents. I am trying to run the meeting so the parents will understand; we have parents coming in from very traditional families, not understanding what is going on in the school. Here all these teachers and administrators are talking way over their heads. These people sign off on papers without even knowing what they are signing. I get so angry when I see this.

- This varies from district to district. In Zuni we require a Zuni language speaker to be there with the parents. I have sat in on these meetings as a principal. In one case, I was hearing what was going on and the special education teacher was really trying to force a decision on the parents without giving them a chance to respond. So finally I spoke to the parents in Zuni and explained what was actually being discussed and that they had a right to accept that option or we could develop another recommendation if they preferred. They wouldn't accept the decision being forced on them and when the teacher kept pushing, I called for a recess. Then I took the teacher aside and talked with her. But you don't find that kind of process across the board.

IV. Teacher Training

- One of the problems we are also facing in Montana is the isolation factor. We need a lot of good in-service at the local level for our teachers and our parents, especially regarding students' self-expectations regardless of whether they are exceptional, gifted, or average. We need to cultivate the type of behavior where all students are giving the best they have to offer. We are working with Eastern Montana State, but one of the schools that I service is 80 miles away from Eastern, so we can get out there one day a week if we are lucky. Also, after teaching all day, it is hard for us to sit from 4:00 to 7:00pm.

- I don't know about anyone else, but I really wanted to be in special education and had to go all the way to Penn State to do it. If anyone says that getting a masters degree is easy, they are lying. I am not married and I don't have any kids and have been out of the city for a number of years, so it was hard for me to go back East. How can you expect someone from the reservation or a local community to go that far to get an education and then come back to be with their people? It is hard. I almost gave up at the end because I was so homesick. So I wish they had more special education training programs near or around universities and communities. We also need more programs to train paraprofessionals.

- I am on the faculty of University of California in Irvine, and we have a partnership between the Chancellor and President of the university and Joe Frazier, the Principal of Sherman Indian High School. Under this agreement, I am released half-time to support an on-site effective school program and teacher training. Training is currently focusing on process and not product. This is part of the state teacher training mandate. Teacher credentialling is driven by legislation, not by the community, and the legislation in California is toward process oriented, cognitive approaches that emphasize higher levels of critical thinking.

  On the down side, we don't attract enough Indians to the university. This is my 18th year at UC Irvine, and in that time we have had 10 or fewer Indian students come through teacher training. That just isn't enough. They want to go to higher paying jobs if they come to the university. They are highly recruited and given scholarships to do other things because teaching is a credential program, not a degree program. There is no money for non-degree programs. So we can't go out and recruit people and say "Here is money to come and be a teacher." We can't compete with engineering or the corporations who offer scholarships in exchange for students' commitments to come to work for them for five years. So we are not attracting the best and brightest. However we are attracting a very good level of students; we have not accepted a student with a GPA under 3.4 since I have been in my department. But our numbers are small and very few minorities are attracted.

This year at UC Irvine I think we probably have 41 Indian students and they are very highly courted. Education has the least money to offer as enticement and after graduation salaries and social status rewards are not as high as they are in other fields.

I think partnerships are the answer to bringing in more creative teaching. We must build partnerships between local universities and school districts for teacher and student exchanges so that new ideas are brought in, and also new training approaches. It is hard with teachers who have been around for years. I love old teachers and I plan to be one and I don't want anyone coming around and telling me I have been around too long. New teachers have plenty to learn from old teachers on management skills and transitional activities, but new teachers also have a lot to offer veteran teachers. So I believe that partnerships are the answer. They are working in southern California. We even have some three-point partnerships between the local schools, the university, and corporations.

V. Regulatory Issues

- I have a question about the BIA guidelines on exceptionality. In public schools you can have a director/teacher, or a coordinator/teacher; that seems to be the best, most logical policy, especially in small, isolated, rural schools. My concern is that the BIA guidelines need to be really clear about the possibility of combining positions like that in regard to both gifted and talented programs and those for learning disabled. If you can only have the program if you have both a coordinator and a teacher, then there isn't enough money to meet the needs of the children, because you can't afford two salaries with the money that is sent by the government. If this combining of positions is not allowed, I would recommend such a change for small rural and boarding schools.

- I am concerned with the guidelines for the GATE programs, because we are just adopting them out of the dominant society and using them with our Indian children. We need to have something unique for Indian students.

- We really need to be concerned about the assessment tools correlating with our curriculum. I know that the BIA requires the California Achievement Test (CAT) to be the standardized test across its system. The CAT is based on the California state framework and the curriculum and textbooks adopted in California. The BIA does not have its schools on a textbook cycle, and the schools are not necessarily required to be accredited through the Western Accreditation Association. So the CAT has very little relationship to the curriculum our children are learning in school.

  As a result, we had only four students who scored above the 90th percentile on the CAT. When they have never been exposed to that material, they have to be absolute geniuses to score that high. Yet they can't qualify for GATE unless they are in the 95th to 98th percentile.

The whole thing is not thought through very well. I would like the BIA to look at why its schools are not on the textbook cycle. The reason is because no Impact Aid goes to the State Department of Education for BIA schools. In our area Impact Aid money goes to Indian people on El Toro Marine Base and not to those who attend Sherman Indian High School. Children at the marine base get their money through the State Department of Education and so they get state-adopted textbooks at reduced rates and are on the state cycle. With Sherman Indian School in Riverside, the BIA says, "We don't want to pay ourselves Impact Aid money," or "We don't want to pay the state Impact Aid money for a BIA school," so Sherman is not on the cycle and doesn't get the textbooks. I would assume the same is true in every state where there are BIA residential schools.

I therefore recommend that a contract be established between the BIA and the State Departments of Education so that Impact Aid money could go to all Indian schools through the states and they could get up-to-date texts.

Just for clarity, the textbook cycle is implemented over an eight year-period, so that one year they buy math books, the next year science, and so forth. This cycle completely missed Indian children. There is nothing in the BIA budget that is designated for textbooks, only the per child allotment, and this is insufficient. It means you are in a position of having to choose between feeding kids, providing a counselor, or having current textbooks. Sherman Indian School's per pupil allocation is less than nearby Huntington Beach where students are only in school for six hours a day. Yet we have the students on a 24-hour basis and have to provide three meals a day and residential counselors. What necessary service are we going to deny to get textbooks? Not only that, but state-adopted textbooks cost about one-third of the texts that the Indian school could buy directly because of reduced rates.

- One problem with this suggestion is that state education departments get caught in a bind on Impact Aid because they don't want the federal government supervising, and yet there can be a lot of loopholes and in times past the auditor's office has uncovered some scandalous things. For instance, one program had arranged for the man that drove the Coca Cola truck to be there on Tuesday if that was the day to count eligible students. Anyway, if you ask the state department to do this, they will go to their legislature and request money to hire people to administer the funds. State legislators will say that it is federal business and the federal government should put up the money. Then you have to go back to Congress and plead with them to allow some of the Impact Aid money to be set aside for administrative costs and so the amount gets slimmed down and the money does not reach the children it is designed to assist.

VI. School Improvement Strategies

- I think the transition from elementary to intermediate level is really an important transition for young people. We have been looking at this for several years at Zuni and trying to determine what needs to be done to deal with these issues. We see a rise in negative socialization. We see students not being able to pick up the subject matter. And we see teachers not having enough time to teach because they are coming from a self-contained situation to almost a shot-gun approach with seven-period schedules and only limited time to concentrate on an area.

- At this transition point kids begin to segregate themselves, whereas in the earlier years kids intermingle more. This is especially true where Native American students are minorities in public schools. As young children they can have friends who are non-Native, but by the time they are older, Native kids seem to gravitate toward the back of the room, as if they have figured out that is their place. So we need to figure out ways to help these kids feel like they belong up front and in the middle as well as in the back. Teachers could influence this by looking at the physical environment in their classrooms and mixing it up a bit more.

Of course this is a process that goes way back and continues on even in college. When I was a Native student in college, we segregated ourselves because we felt more comfortable among ourselves and with other Indians from Navajo, Pueblo, or Sioux groups.

- I have just joined the Santa Barbara Urban Indian Health Project as the education coordinator. I have also recently completed a step my Indian educator friends recommended I take years ago--a Ford Foundation-sponsored program in holistic education. I feel that this process-oriented framework that they advocate is what we need so much.

This past summer I taught creative writing for the UCSB Upward Bound Program; we had one Navajo student and the rest were Black and Chicano. With my Montessori training and now my masters in holistic education, I am convinced that teachers can create positive classroom environment with a certain basic ingredients. If you don't have much money, you don't need textbooks.

If teachers can facilitate helping students identify their current interests and integrate writing with speaking, then students can work in areas where they will be personally motivated to read and focus their concentration. This is as true for native English speakers as it is for those children who are learning English as a second language. (I also have a TESL certificate.) We talk, talk, talk, and most of us write about five minutes a day if we do any at all. So we need to emphasize writing more strongly in a non-compulsory and encouraging setting.

You have to trust children to discover their own interests and learning processes. As the teacher you have to facilitate this discovery and then the development of their skills as the students pursue their interests. You and the child set goals and this is where the grade comes from. We are traditionally so product-oriented, we break the children in the process of getting the grade on the product. Although I agree that there has to be a product, if it is based on individual interests, the product will come.

How would we go about training teachers to use this approach? I think we have to use programs like those in our county and our community college, where high school students who might want to teach are recruited early. Then they can begin to be trained in this holistic process. But we can't wait for this to generate new teachers--we also must work on our local credentialling programs, so that teacher training programs are changed.

- I agree that it is easier to teach creative writing without textbooks, but it is not easy to teach science, physics, chemistry, and biology. For these subjects you must have textbooks and adequate funding.

VII. Dealing with Dropouts

- There has been a lot of effort in our local school districts to curb the high school dropout factor. Most of the schools are now provided with counselors.

For White Shield we have one juvenile officer who lives in Newtown, which is 70 miles away and another in Mandaree which is 60 miles from Newtown and across the river. The officer who lives in Newtown is supposed to take care of all the kids in our area. There is a law on the reservation that kids have to stay in school until they are 18, but how is anyone going to keep track of this when the one juvenile officer is so far away? You can make all the laws in the world, but if you don't enforce them they are meaningless. A lot of these kids just quit school and drop out.

The juvenile officer makes it down there about every two weeks, and by that time the kids are so far behind it is almost too late. How are you going to get them back in there and get them caught up?

- Extra-curricular activities offer something else to tie students into the school besides just academics. If you don't fit in in terms of academics--like many of our students--there are also clubs, band, music, and other afterschool activities where you can feel like you belong to the school community. Then you will be more interested in school because there is something there for you to do that you enjoy.

VIII. Other Issues

- We have some teachers in our elementary school who have been there for 30 years. But when we get to the high school there is a big teacher turnover and it is hard to get staff. Right now we don't have a counselor. We haven't had a counselor for six years because it is so isolated out there. We have tried everything including offering $5,000 over their normal salary, and we still can't get anyone. There are no towns around there--you have to drive some 70 miles to find a place where you can shop.

- We have an alcohol and drug program now at White Shield School staffed by a drug and alcohol counselor, who is the only person we have working as any kind of counselor. This is really penalizing the kids because they get no support services and no college counseling.

INAR/NACIE Joint Issues Sessions
NIEA 22nd Annual Conference - San Diego, California
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"Postsecondary Education"

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Summary: "Postsecondary Education"

The first session on postsecondary education was co-hosted by INAR Task Force member Bob Martin. The second session on this issue was co-hosted by INAR Task Force member Janine Pease-Windy Boy and NACIE Council member Margaret Nelson. The following issues, recommendations, and exemplary programs were discussed:

I. Recruitment

- There is strong competition among colleges, universities, and trade schools to attract Indian students. A directory should be created to describe the benefits and trade-offs for each institution so students would know about their various postsecondary options. Competition among institutions would inspire the institutions to provide attractive services such as financial aid or tutorial assistance to interest students in attending their school.

- The American Indian Science and Engineering Society in Boulder, CO, was formed about 13 years ago. It offers positive activities such as mentoring, program development, teacher training, job fairs, and science fairs, in addition to highly respected role models. Organizations such as this one are able to publicly demonstrate their benefits though conferences and publications. They serve many functions by helping Indian students find jobs, funding, and scholarships.

II. Student Retention

Problems

- I went to a large university where I had no understanding of the system. My major source of survival came from the fact that my brother had gone to school there and he told me the process. Nevertheless, I still felt that the registration system was as excruciatingly difficult as any class I ever attended.

  I am just short of finishing my doctoral program and I recognize that the probability of success was strongly against me. For me to graduate from high school was a significant step, but attending a postsecondary institution put me among a very small minority of Indians. I am even in a smaller minority because I completed my bachelors degree and am currently working in a doctoral program. Every time I went back to school I experienced pain and bewilderment. I did attempt a master's program that I didn't complete. When I first started work on my doctoral program, I almost turned around and went home before I even got to the institution. These experiences and the level of emotional pain I have felt makes me extremely sensitive toward students who attend postsecondary institutions, including those in tribal colleges. Currently I am a counselor. I've been at Salish Kootenai College for five years, and every quarter I see students coming in with that same level of pain, even though it's an Indian institution on the reservation.

  Most of the discussion I hear regarding retention of Indian students in postsecondary institutions seems to center around skill levels, preparation in high school, and math and science ability. But I don't believe these are the key issues. I feel intrapersonal issues cause the highest number of dropouts.

I believe that the whole public school system is destructive, not only for Indian people but for non-Indians as well. Linear thinking and non-holistic thinking taught in the education system don't work. One of my teachers says that he believes most social diseases can be directly traced to public schools and the trauma they cause young people. The whole system needs to be examined.

- A lot of students, especially those coming from reservations, don't know how to handle being around the majority people. Most of their social contacts have been with Indian people. We have a lot of girls going home pregnant because they don't know how to handle peer pressure. Some students have problems with drinking because they were not able to do it at home, or they did it in a different way.

- Many students who leave home to go to college do not realize that racism and discrimination exist there and they need to know how to handle it. We handle it differently at home than we do at an institution because it's a different type of racism. There is such a thing as institutional racism that the institutions need to deal with, but the students also need to be able to deal with it.

- One of the biggest handicaps or problems that students encounter is their lack of high school preparation for college. They have a more difficult time when they reach the college level. For this reason, our college has developed some developmental courses in math and language arts to meet those needs.

Recommendations

- If we're just going to talk about postsecondary institutions and how to get Native American people to stay, then we need to concentrate on a holistic, medicine-wheel approach where spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical areas are all addressed. An extensive mentor program may be a start in this direction. I also believe we need extensive sensitization for the instructors regarding Indian people. Ignorance of Indian culture and learning styles is not an excuse.

- Having more minority faculty and staff at universities would increase the likelihood of Native Americans completing their degree programs.

- In order to assist Indian students in being successful, contacts need to be developed before they enter the institution. I was so shy that if I had an hour between classes, I would drive ten miles across town to go home because I felt inadequate and uncomfortable in undefined situations such as in student lounges, student unions, or even cafeterias. During my second quarter in college, I took a Native American studies class and I really think that is what kept me in school. I became familiar with an instructor who informed me of the Native American Studies Program of which I had previously been unaware. I used that contact as an excuse to go to the Native American Studies Program and visit with this instructor. Then I discovered a place that I could go and feel safe in between classes.

- We need to prepare Indian children at an earlier age for college. We need to reach into the lower grades in order for students to be successful and not so crisis-oriented, especially if you want to plant the idea of college and set the expectation that yes, you can go to college if you so choose.

- Students should be given a realistic understanding of what is involved in going to college and what it takes to be successful. In my work in four-year colleges I have had a number of students from rural communities who didn't have the faintest idea of what it took to succeed.

- To recognize the trauma that has occurred to the Indian people as a whole over the years, you need to have adequate counseling and people who really understand how Indian children feel and think. I come from a broken family. I'm in the third or fourth generation of alcoholism in my family. One of my children has an alcohol and drug problem and I still have little ones whom I worry about. The drinking and drugs is just a symptom of what is really going on. I went to a college in California where there were only six Indians. This was quite a shock, coming from the reservation. I went to a little two-year junior college at Hartnell and I got kicked out. I didn't drop out--they threw me out because I raised so much Cain. We did get active as an Indian group, but we were a wild bunch so they threw me out.

  To feel a part of a school, students have to have a closeness and be recognized. Our reservation college is one of the fastest growing colleges right now. All of the students who are fresh out of high school seem to experience culture shock. I don't know how we're going to prepare them for college except maybe teach them some skills such as how to budget, how to manage money, and who to talk to.

  I have three children in college and they're struggling. Two of them have children themselves, but they don't have parenting skills. We need day care for Native Americans in our local colleges and colleges throughout the nation.

- It would help if there was a way to enable parents to go and visit their children in college. I know it would have helped me when I was struggling through my first year of school. When a relative shows up and sees that you're really trying, it makes you try harder.

- We need some Elders to pull the students up, to talk to them, give them pep talks, teach them about prayer, and about the circle of life. I predict that 99 percent of our students don't understand that. They need the culture. And this can be meshed together with the non-Indian society. It works--I've seen it work.

- A support system is one of the most needed things, whether it comes about through students banding together or through a counselor or some kind of organization. A support system is tremendously important because everything is so strange when you go away to college. The food is strange, the surroundings are strange, the people are strange, and you feel so much on the outside. Just to have something or someone there to reassure you is tremendously important.

- I did poorly during my first quarter at a community college because I started with classes that were beyond my abilities. I think there should have been somebody to advise me about what courses to take.

Programs That Work

- One of the goals at Haskell is to reduce our attrition rate. We have taken the student assistance model from the Hazelden Foundation and adapted it to meet our needs. This is an intervention model that uses a team approach. At Haskell, if a student has a problem, a team consisting of the dorm advisor, academic advisor, and social advisor supports the student in a positive manner. Traditionally one advisor didn't understand what was happening in the other realms of a student's life. But by bringing all of the advisors together, if a student has a problem, he or she has a support system that incorporates important people from all areas of the college setting. We hope this process will help build self-esteem. Furthermore, this model is goal-oriented. Thus, if a student has a problem, intervention will include a written plan of action that articulates specific goals.

- Recruiting numbers of minority students and faculty is good, but you need to have a community that's ready to accept them. So we're doing a lot more with the community, getting them involved in activities on campus and in a mentoring program that was developed this semester. The mentoring program allows community members to work one-on-one with minority students. If nothing else, this builds contacts, so when students leave campus they have community people who have been involved with them for a couple of years and can provide good references for them. We have a half-time person employed as a mentoring program coordinator who works with a full-time minority recruiter. Each incoming freshman is set up with a sophomore. This is a peer mentoring component of the program. The sophomore becomes a mentor for the freshman just to be a friend, or a "cohort in crime." The juniors are given community mentors who are recruited by the administration. They go to lunch and talk about careers, education, required courses, and other such issues. Our chancellor actually goes to the Rotary Club, the Lyons Club, the Elks Club, and to different businesses in the community, such as large insurance companies, to recruit people with specific skills who can work with students.

III. Funding for Postsecondary Education

Inadequate Funding

- In 1968 all kinds of scholarship money was available, and then around 1971 there was a crunch. All of the sudden funding sources were either demanding matching funds or were refusing to help at all. This is where Indian people are now, in a funding crunch.

- There is a real need to train more American Indian teachers to work with Indian children in both public and Bureau schools, yet there is a continuing cutting of funds for higher education while costs of attending college skyrocket.

- Funding given out through the BIA has cutoffs at five years or ten semesters, whichever comes first. However, the average time for a student to finish a baccalaureate degree nationwide is currently six years. The regulations and policies clearly need to change accordingly.

- Often there is no funding available for people who live off reservations.

- I participated in the IEA, Title V, Educational Personnel Development (EPD) program at Penn State years ago and we were receiving the same stipend as is given today--$600 per month plus $90 per dependent. That was in 1974 and 1975; now it is 1990 and they are receiving the same amount of money despite the fact that inflation has doubled, tripled, or even quadrupled. This is an administrative decision within the Department of Education; it was not mandated by law. I ask that the Task Force and NACIE see if policy could be changed to reflect an increase in the living stipend that would be current for today.

- I get a certain amount of financial aid and I am also on welfare. Between the two sources of money I only receive around $400 per month. However, because I get financial aid, my welfare is going to be cut. There needs to be some federal law dictating that states not cut off people's welfare just because they receive a little financial aid. This affects my grades because I have so many worries, especially because I want to take good care of my daughter.

- I think the tribal college system is the best thing we've done to get Native American people into postsecondary education. However, there is not enough funding for tribal colleges. Compared to any state formula, Native American institutions are not receiving adequate funding per student.

The Impact of Inadequate Funding

- A number of studies have shown that the reason students drop out of school is because of financial difficulties. If we can somehow address this concern, it would be a great boon for students and I think we would see more of a success rate. We need financial support, including money for books. We have to scrimp and save and petition different organizations and charities to donate to our cause so we can buy books for our students. The rules and regulations say that stipends can only be used for living and tuition. If we can include money for some incidentals, it would be a great help to our students.

- Funding from the BIA has a unit cutoff requirement so that Indian students cannot take classes outside of their majors even if they will personally benefit from the courses. Students are penalized for taking courses such as tribal citizenship, history, or sociology because they will reach their unit limit and their funding will be cut off.

- Because of the kind of developmental coursework that so many American Indian students need to take in the beginning of their postsecondary careers, their ability to receive financial aid throughout their college career becomes very limited toward the end of the junior or senior years. There is plenty of emphasis on science and math, but getting someone through a math or science major is very difficult because of the time it takes to make up for things missed in high school. A postsecondary experience could potentially be six years long. However, Pell grants will run out by then even for the finest students who do make up the developmental differences and become competitive to finish a degree in math or science. At Little Big Horn College we've had a number of students who simply ran out of financial aid, and there are very few opportunities or options available to them.

- In California and a few other states, a person needs a four-year baccalaureate degree plus a professional development year, which is a fifth year of school, in order to be certified as a teacher. If a person wants to be a special education teacher, that requires an additional two years on top of the certification for a basic credential. To be a principal requires an additional two years on top of that. None of these courses are considered to be at the graduate or undergraduate level; they are professional development years, and thus students in these courses are not eligible for funding under most BIA policies and procedures. We say we need more Indian teachers but there is no way to fund them to get their credentials because of this extra year.

- There is a critical need for well-trained leadership in Indian education. This means training people at leading universities in the country. One such program is the Native American Program, formerly the American Indian Program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. In over 20 years, the program has assisted more than 150 Indians in obtaining masters and doctoral degrees. Our graduates are working for the benefit of Indian people in various roles across the country. Programs such as the one at Harvard need support, especially in the areas of student financial aid and program funding in order to remain a viable source of highly-trained leadership for Indian country. Harvard doesn't have a concentration in Indian studies or Indian education, but there has always been a strong Indian presence at the School of Education which fulfills students' needs to discuss Indian issues in the form of seminars, informal discussions, and forums. The Indian students at Harvard have been a great resource to the professors and often find their knowledge to be in great demand. The school is research-oriented and somewhat theoretical so the students learn the theories to adopt to particular situations, including Indian education. The community of Indian students at Harvard, no matter how small, provides a support system to help the students through the program. In recent years, funding for programs such as Harvard's has diminished. The loss of federal support has threatened the viability of our program and others. It's time to strengthen the link between the critical needs of Indian education and programs that train Indian professionals at a high level. Funding needs to be renewed for these programs.

Problems with Eligibility Requirements

There are large numbers of Indian people in California who are not affiliated with Part 83 recognized tribes as listed in the Federal Register each year. Many of these people are individuals who are certifiable by the BIA as possessing a large quantum of Indian blood, who many have received numerous services over the years, who may have interests in trust allotments, but now because of changes in federal policy and the emphasis on tribal governments, are basically being abandoned.

Funding is a critical factor for Indian people to be able to complete higher education. In many federal programs, those dollars are unavailable to these large numbers of California Indian people. Because there are many aboriginal tribes in California that are not land-based, they don't have the luxury of operating as functional tribal governments. Because of policy shifts in the last five or ten years on how "Indian" is defined, we probably have thousands of individuals who have received services in the past from federal agencies and are being told that they no longer are Indians.

We have individuals that have gone halfway through college on BIA higher education grants who when they reapply are told they are ineligible because they are not Indian. This is in part because of the policy requirement of tribal certification. Well, if you don't have an organized, federally-recognized tribe, or if you are affiliated with a group that is recently unterminated and consequently has not been able to develop government systems, you are cut off from any kind of access to resources. Because of this, California is creating tremendous problems for access to higher education for aboriginal Indian people in the state.

In many statutes there are references to recognized tribes as defined by Part 83, which is the Bureau's annual listing of recognized tribes. This list came into existence about ten years ago. It is ridiculous to say that a person needs to be an enrolled member of a tribe on that list in order to qualify for a statue that came into existence 15 or 20 years ago--the list didn't even exist then. In my mind, recognition is meant to refer to other acknowledgements of the historical existence of a tribal group and the affiliation of an individual with that historical tribe. In California there are Wintus, Shastas, Midus, Talawas, and memberships comprising thousands of aboriginal California Indians that the Bureau can certify. But they are setting up systems to implement programs that basically cut off eligibility. For example, they may say, "We can certify you as Talawa and you've got a trust allotment, and therefore you are eligible, but all the monies are going to be handled through tribes."

Until recently, the Bureau did fund individuals who were not enrolled members of Part 83 tribes by certifying blood quantum. This system is still in place and it still could be utilized.

The Burden of Loans

- Loans are not a good solution. The NDSL program is one that is being deferred by a number of tribal colleges, including Little Big Horn, because we feel that we're contributing to a debt load that students shouldn't have to accept. This also presents a potential barrier for students who have to drop out of school at any point and then try to get back in later. In Montana there is some discussion whether a student who owes a loan from a previous institution can receive a deferment from an institution that as a standard defers administration of NDSL. These students have been ruled in default, but normally they would have a student deferment. However, because they are in a school that does not offer NDSL loans, they don't get a deferment; they go into default. Thus, some financial aid poses a terrific burden to American Indian students because of their incapacity to carry a debt load.

- There is always a dilemma in identifying who is or is not Indian. There was one student who identified himself as white all through high school, but when he came to the university he identified himself as Indian because of the available scholarships.

Recommendations

- Students need to know how to budget money before they go to college. Even those students that are getting enough funds often will drop out because they run out of money before the semester ends. It's not necessarily because they didn't get enough money, but because they just never handled money before and don't know how to budget.

- It is important that we do not simply base our funding packages on financial need. We need to base our funding on other things such as scholarship, tribal needs, and priorities of the schools. If there is a need for MDs, we need to fully fund people who can do this.

- Efforts need to be made to monitor financial aid programs on campuses so that BIA and tribal funds are not used to supplant existing aid that students are eligible for, but are used to supplement it.

- In the health professions there is a program that allows individuals to receive scholarships in exchange for committing a certain number of years to work in public health facilities. I would like to see the Department of Education consider something along those lines for other fields. Funding should be made available for students in exchange for working a set period of time. This would benefit the professions and would allow tribal people to pursue different areas where expertise is needed, such as librarians, computer experts, administrators, and many other professionals. This would be a way to direct graduates to locations where they are needed and also to encourage development in areas where tribes need expertise.

- One tribe provides financial aid and scholarships for tribal members to attend postsecondary schools. The only requirement of the tribe is that the student graduates. If the money is not used towards completing a degree, the individual at fault owes the tribe all of the money plus interest.

- Recently there has been a bandwagon approach by groups to create organizations to funnel money to Indian students for scholarships and program money. This could create a self-help funding source for Indians, but there is a validity problem with these groups concerning the overhead cut they take. If these groups really want to help, they can follow a policy similar to that of the United Way, i.e., to be a member in the organization, you have to have X less than

25 percent overhead or General and Administrative (G&A) costs. By setting a limit, people who are trying to profit from the organization would find the venture unprofitable. I see most of this as sucking blood from the Indian people and only trying to promote oneself.

Office of Indian Education Fellowships

- The Fellowship Program under the Office of Indian Education is probably one of the most significant aspects of the Indian Education Act and one that has benefitted a great number of Indian graduate students across the country. However, some Indian people have concerns about the Fellowship Program. The application itself needs to be more specific regarding who is eligible to receive these fellowships. The criteria for selection should be more stringent than they currently are. From the standpoint of the questions asked on the application, any graduate student of any race or ethnic group could probably write statements about their commitment to working with Indian education and Indian people after graduation. Anyone can write those kinds of statements; the problem is assuring that this commitment is undertaken.

I suggest there be an obligation to the Indian community for the recipients of these fellowships. For example, people who receive fellowships for three or four years to complete medical or law school should be required to work with the Indian community for the same amount of time the fellowships were received. If they choose not to, they should be required to pay back the money in the same amount of time the fellowships were received. The requirement to work with the Indian community does not have to be immediate; it could be within a certain period of time.

- Fellowship recipients should have some evidence of their degree of Indian blood, or proof of membership in a tribe. It is important that we have people who have tribal backgrounds and work with tribal people upon completion of their degree.

- Fellowship recipients are probably enticed into the public sector by higher salaries than they could get working with Indian people, but the point is they're using Indian monies to get their education rather than going to other sources and taking out loans. Anyone is free to do that, but if they are using Indian money, they have an obligation to Indian people. If it's mandated in an application and they sign an agreement, then there is some recourse.

- The people that I have known who have been fellowship participants are not necessarily involved with Indian people. A study was conducted to track fellowship recipients, but it has not yet been released. They know that recipients do have a high completion rate, but they aren't able to trace those people back into the community. It's very difficult to keep track of where those people are. One suggestion is for NACIE members to take responsibility to contact the fellowship recipients in their state or region and keep some kind of contact with them. We should let recipients know that we are out there and we support them, but we expect them to do something for Indian people. I think this really speaks to building the infrastructure of the Indian communities. We can keep track of these people and maintain connections because the Indian community is relatively finite.

- We have five resource centers right now and we're going to have a sixth that I don't think are being used as fully or effectively as they could be. This is one possibility for monitoring fellowship recipients because I don't think that the Office of Indian Education has the personpower to handle that load. There are 200 fellowship recipients all across the country and they have one person assigned to the fellowship program. We could use the centers or

NACIE to help because these are people who are in the field dealing with Indian education daily.

- If an engineering major drops out from the University of Oklahoma, instead of giving the scholarship to another engineering student who may be attending Stanford or Georgia Tech, the scholarship stays at the University of Oklahoma. I don't think that is appropriate. If we are funding a student in engineering, that money should go to the next engineering student versus the next student who happens to be at that institution. This may be administratively difficult to do, but if we're going to meet the needs in the professional areas where we're funding fellowships, maybe we should look at the next person that's deserving or has ranked high in that particular area.

IV. Tribal Colleges

Recognition of the Need

- Tribal colleges on reservations provide an opportunity for success because they can work one-on-one with their students. Part of the advisement system has to be one-on-one because our community colleges are our stepping stones to Montana State University, Eastern Montana College, or even Harvard. Our advising and counseling really affects the retention of students. We counsel students not only for the present, but for future goals as well. This also aids in the retention of students in that they can set goals for themselves. It is important that students have personal meetings with faculty advisors who can help them choose the right career direction and select the right four-year college.

- American Indian students are comfortable going to schools close to home for a number of reasons: (1) they can combat homesickness because they are so close to home; and (2) they feel comfortable because other Indian students are in their classes.

- Having a tribal college at Crow Agency has affected the attitude of the young people in grade school there. The tribal college plays an educational role by introducing higher education to young people. The college also provides a math and science camp for two communities on the reservation to instill in young people the notion that they, too, can be mathematicians and scientists.

Expansion of Tribal Colleges

- I would like to see each institution offer four-year programs in addition to two-year programs.

- The students attending Salish Kootenai College will switch majors on the basis of a rumor that a four-year degree will be offered at that institution in order not to have to drive to the University of Montana which is 60 miles away. A lot of people do attend the University of Montana to get a four-year degree, but they stay on the reservation and drive back and forth every day.

- At Salish Kootenai, only one out of five students transfers to a four-year institution; that is why it is imperative for tribal colleges to move toward four-year degree programs. Interviews with students reveal that they would overwhelmingly prefer four-year programs for the tribal colleges.

- Several years ago Bacone considered becoming a four-year college. They did a feasibility study and found it would take about $7 million to make that transition. For a private college like Bacone, it would be very difficult. I don't know what the possibility would be with Haskell Junior College. However, many young Indian people have expressed interest in this possibility.

- At Haskell we established long-range goals that we call visions. One of our goals is to move toward offering a baccalaureate degree, but after hearing that figure of $7 million, I don't know. We know that it is expensive, but we think that with the cooperation of tribal colleges and four-year institutions, we could accomplish this.

- I would like to see the tribal college system strengthened and enlarged and available to more tribes than it currently is.

Control of Tribal Colleges

- Even tribal colleges, which are probably an example of the most revolutionary form of educational development, are still tied to non-Indian controls and external regulations. We have rules, regulations, and legislation. We have a certification and accreditation process that continue to be externally imposed upon us. Even though we talk about local control, we still have to maintain some standards that really are designed by and for somebody off the reservation. At Rosebud, we are trying to turn this around.

Relationships with Four-Year Institutions

- Salish Kootenai makes visits available to every student who wants to transfer to another institution. They take the students to the institution and introduce them to special services, Native American studies programs, and even the people within their desired major.

- There is a high success rate of tribal college students matriculating to four-year institutions because they become familiar with the system of higher education. They get the attitude that they are able to attend a postsecondary institution and be successful.

- I would like to see partnerships made between tribes and postsecondary institutions to provide students opportunities to do community-based research on our reservations and also be visiting professors at these institutions so that we can be role models for the younger students.

- Four-year colleges don't want to expend their resources for remediation or for a developmental year. This mindset of four-year institutions affects the issue of accessibility and who is going to end up at the community colleges. For instance, at a university near Haskell College, one professor said, "I am not a high school teacher; I'm a university professor. If you want to pay me $50,000 a year to teach high school, I think you're making a big mistake. The high school should be doing a better job, or those people should be taught elsewhere. They should be going to community colleges."

- Many tribal colleges are investigating or participating in cooperative agreements with four-year colleges and universities. One of the structural problems with this concept of two-plus-two is that it is really three-plus-two. The share of resources disproportionately places a heavy burden on the community college. As colleges and universities look at two-plus-two arrangements with community colleges, where most Indian students begin their studies, they must realize the burden of resources that it takes to address the developmental needs of

Indian students. There should be some understanding or sharing of resources in developing those individuals.

- Some partnerships function on a dual admission so that there is a dual involvement with the student from the time he or she is admitted at the community college until he or she attends the four-year institution. The possibility of dual admissions can strengthen institutional sensitivity to resource dedication. This structure is currently in place in one community college in Wyoming, and it is being investigated for several of the tribal colleges.

- The University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point has an agreement with Haskell Indian Junior College whereby those students who are majoring in natural resources can go to Haskell for their first two years and then automatically transfer to Stevens Point to complete a bachelors degree. These students become accustomed to college in a comfortable setting while completing their general degree requirements, and then fulfill their bachelors degree requirements in Wisconsin.

V. Institutional Change

- What is the possibility of having an all-Indian university where Indians could come as students and the staff would be all Indian? At Oglala Lakota College we have been working towards that goal and we've been in operation for 20 years now. We see a tremendous change in our communities as the students get their two- and four-year degrees. They are becoming more knowledgeable and they're questioning things. I see quite a growth on our reservation. Both Oglala Lakota and Sinte Gleska offer a degree in education at the masters level. It is apparent that both of those institutions have a specific interest in that level of education. There has been some talk about such a university, but it's just in the discussion stage.

- If postsecondary institutions are going to address the needs of Indian students, it's important that we elicit their involvement. This can be accomplished in the context of a planning process. For the last year and a half at Haskell we established a planning process and systematically received the input of students as well as alumni, faculty, and staff. We conducted surveys of the Indian communities that we serve. It is important to empower the people that we serve if we are going to have an education that addresses their needs. This is a thorough process that takes a lot of time because we are trying to relate the planning process to decisionmaking. I think it's incumbent on all institutions to do that.

- In the last 25 years, we've had any number of studies done on Indian people. However, to this day, nothing has ever come of them. I would recommend that at the conclusion of the work of the Task Force, a forum be established where educators can come and have a free exchange and dialogue with you regarding the issues that are brought out through these hearings. At Sinte Gleska College in Rosebud, South Dakota, we are initiating education forums at the community level because many people can not attend conferences or conventions such as this one. We have put together volunteer committees to work on the issues brought out at our forums. We may need to take the next decade and advance that in some kind of a forum for an institutional problem-solving kind of process with NIEA.

VI. Educational Programs

Programmatic Emphasis

- At Haskell we want to integrate multicultural education throughout our curriculum. There needs to be more research on how to systematically implement and evaluate a multicultural curriculum. To me, multicultural education is a philosophical orientation. It's a perspective that involves not just one course in Native American studies; it's integrated throughout the curricula. I saw a history textbook at a university that had all the information on minorities in one section and was color-coded. The same textbook also made the statement that Columbus discovered a new world. More research definitely needs to be done in multicultural education, especially as we're preparing our young people not only to retain their heritage and be successful in the Indian world, but also to be successful in the dominant society. I think we've got to be able to move successfully from one world to another and I think multicultural education is the answer. We need to recognize the value of diversity and reflect it in our curricula. We also need to avoid stereotypes of ethnic groups and sexes.

- The philosophy of the Navajo Community College in Arizona is based on the four cardinal directions--East, South, West, and North--in which Navajo traditional values and concepts are emphasized. All of our concepts and values are striving toward a balanced and harmonious person. The eastern direction is based on values of life; the southern direction is based on vocational skills; the western direction is based on social skills; and the northern direction is based on respect for nature and environment. This philosophy is used throughout the education process from preschool and elementary school up through high school and college. It is also used in drug and alcohol programs. We feel that a lot of our Indian people would be able to learn if they understood these values and concepts that lead to a balanced and harmonious life.

Curricular Materials

- Our textbooks do not tell the truth. They don't necessarily lie--they just leave out the truth. This not only affects Indians who are not hearing the truth about their history, but White students are also being deprived of the truth. As they grow up and go into college and then become adults, they are conditioned by what they have been taught. This is what I believe is really affecting Indian and White relations today. For example, textbooks say that 50 million buffalo were killed from 1829 to 1879 because of a mistake due to the railroads cutting across the plains. They never mentioned that when you kill the buffalo, you kill the Indian. I don't think White students would be offended to hear this; I think they would be surprised. Furthermore, I think that these students would look at Indian people with a new respect.

- Newberry Library undertook a couple of summer institutes with tribal college history teachers and some high school history teachers to identify certain points in history. They then produced a supplementary text to accompany the standard U.S. history text that often does not show the diverse contributions to history. The response of the students using that text is very heartening. It's enlightening to see one's own heritage reflected throughout different eras. The next step might be to actually integrate that material into the history text. There are so many other disciplines where this movement has never happened.

VII. Urban Indians

- Students who come from the reservations are culturally aware, culturally entrenched, and feel good about themselves and being Indian. Off-reservation Indians feel disenfranchised from their tribal or cultural identity. I find that the reservation students are more likely to be the stronger students in that they have a cultural base from which to work, and they work together very well as a group. I don't know how to bring the urban Indians into that. I feel them back away when I try to talk them into coming to student organization meetings or participating in events. It's mainly through the efforts of the reservation Indians who reach out to those students that we are able to attract some of those students. I think it's a real issue of cultural disenfranchisement of the urban Indian student.

INAR/NACIE Joint Issues Sessions
NIEA 22nd Annual Conference - San Diego, California
October 16, 1990

"Adult and Vocational Technical Education"

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Summary: "Adult and Vocational Technical Education"

The first issue session on adult and vocational technical education was hosted by INAR Task Force member Ivan Sidney and NACIE Council Executive Director Jo Jo Hunt. The second session on these issues was hosted by INAR Task Force member Joseph Ely and NACIE Council member Buck Martin. The following issues, concerns, and recommendations were discussed during the sessions.

I. Adult Education

Recognizing the Need and Positive Effects

- Because Indian education has failed so much in the last generation, many adult individuals need to go back to school to become literate or trained for a vocation or trade, or to be able to function enough to go on to higher education.

- Adult education affects everything. It affects early childhood education because parents are the first teachers. It affects elementary and secondary education because it places parents in a position to encourage their children. It affects the family in general.

- I was involved in one model project when basic skills money used to be available through the U.S. Department of Education. This was before it disappeared into that vast hole called state revenue sharing. We had children who were coming to adult education classes with their parents, and they received tutorial help with their homework. The school principals wondered what was happening to these students because they really started taking off and doing great work. Parents whose children see them as active learners become forceful role models. Children become motivated because they do not just hear their parents talk, they actually see them learn. I think some of the most effective changes in children come about when they see their parents as active learners.

- Language is the key to every kind of participation, whether it is in tribal government or the local school district. I don't think that it is any accident that the Cherokee Nation is experiencing an upsurge in parental involvement in Head Start and by JOM and bilingual education parent committees. Parents are going out and demanding their rights to participate in the school system because we have had a very, very strong adult education program for a long time. If I look back at Mississippi Choctaw, I see that some of those people who came up through that system are now school board members, parent committee chairpersons, tribal council members, judges, and in a number of other leadership positions. Adult education does have an effect on parental participation. First, it produces leadership. Second, people simply become more articulate. They have more knowledge to provide advocacy for their children and for other people's children.

- We would like to see very serious attention paid to the models of Indian adult education as it affects elementary and secondary education. We take 16-, 17-, and 18-year-old dropouts who have been labeled as troublemakers by court officials, and they are no trouble when they come to us. And if they can gain three to five grade levels in one year in adult education instruction, then this is a really good model that somebody ought to be paying attention to. We ought to be looking at what we know about teaching adults and high school students because it works. Those models need to be promulgated and disseminated.

How Indian Adults Learn

- National research has been conducted to determine how and under what conditions Indian adults learn. Unfortunately, that piece of research is still sitting within the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and has never been released or disseminated. However, we do know that Indian people learn best with Indian teachers and in Indian settings. The research was conducted by National Indian Management, Inc., under the supervision of two principal investigators, Rodney L. Brod and John M. McQuiston. The research was conducted 11 years ago, and the report was completed two years after that, but it was never officially released by ED. Nonetheless, there have been articles published on that research by the principal investigators.

We know from this research that Indian people do not participate in mixed programs with other minority groups, that they participate in their home communities with Indian teachers and in projects that are sponsored by tribes. We also know from the research, from the experience of Indian adult education programs, and from the experience of tribes that do not have programs that the Federal Adult Education Act does not serve Indian adults. There are very few instances in which grants have been or are being made to Indian organizations or institutions. Even if those monies were to become available, they carry too much red-tape and too many built-in limitations to meet the needs of Indian adults. For example, some grants have prohibitions against supportive services such as transportation and child care. In Oregon, only community colleges can offer adult education services with Federal Adult Education Act monies, and thus local organizations and tribes are prohibited from receiving those funds. The Federal Adult Education Act by and large is not serving and cannot serve Indian adults.

Additionally, we are finding that states are claiming to serve large numbers of Indian students whom they in fact are not serving. Oklahoma is a case in point. Anyone who takes the GED test is counted as having been an adult education student in the State of Oklahoma whether or not they received even one iota of instruction or one penny of Federal Adult Education Act money was spent on them. There are literally thousands of Indian adults who are claimed by the State of Oklahoma as having been served when the state turns in its reports to ED.

Knowing the context in which Indian adults learn, we need to address Indians both on and off reservations. I would like to highlight that there is no difference between reservation and urban Indians in that Indian adults will only participate when they are in the Indian context. Being off the reservation does not change the needs of Indian adults.

- There is a very strong need to have models for Indian education and particularly for Indian adult education. The National Indian Adult Education Association has tried to help fill that void, but there needs to be a very formal process. Unfortunately, the program of validating models that ED currently runs is heavily statistical. We are capable of running such programs, but we will not subject Indian adult students to the processes necessary for validation. There need to be some changes within ED to recognize active, viable models in Indian adult education that do not rely on the statistical analyses that are intrusive and completely unamenable to Indian adult learners. We would like a dialogue to occur within ED to see that this does come about. This would probably be beneficial in other areas of Indian education as well.

There has been a tendency to rely on standardized tests for data on student achievement, and we have found that students, particularly older Indian adults, resent coming into a classroom and taking three to five hours of standardized tests before they are even allowed to get started on books. Even after they have been in the program, there is a real fear about testing. People in a number of programs have told me that when they do testing, students leave. Students won't even come into classes during testing periods.

One alternative that we use is a master skills checklist system. We have our own diagnostics, and we have master skills checklists that are scoped and sequenced from zero through the 12th grade level. Although we don't use grade levels, because grades are very inappropriate for adults, we use the same scope and sequence. As the student learns skills and the instructor watches that student successfully perform certain skills for several weeks, then the instructor signs and dates their skill sheet. This provides information on the amount of material that students have learned, and the time frame within which students are learning. This presents a much more accurate picture than anything we have seen done with standardized tests, and it's psychologically and culturally very amenable to the student population.

Problems with Adult Education Programs

- We run an adult basic education (ABE) program at the Navajo Community College on the Navajo reservation; however, the BIA will not let us take over their program. As a tribal college we feel that we have the expertise to run their program, but they have refused to give control of their ABE program to our agency. I see this as a duplication of effort. I also feel that the tribal college does a better job running such programs because we have the expertise in ABE programs.

- We have been told that there are adult education programs that we should connect with, but the closest one is 60 miles away. When it involves traveling over mountainous roads, especially in the wintertime, you will not find students commuting that distance to an adult education program.

- I have a concern about the lack of preparation of adult education and adult vocational students. We get many high school dropouts, but we do not have the funding necessary for them to develop their basic skills or to complete their high school education. On the

Hoopa reservation as many as 85 percent of our students are dropouts, and I know that this number is also high in the Pitt River and Karok tribes.

An Effective Adult Education Program

- One model used in preschool programs and in adult education has been hiring indigenous Native language speaking paraprofessionals as teachers and allowing them to take courses as they teach. I've seen two studies done on this model for continuing education of adults at Mississippi Choctaw and at the Boston Indian Council. Through this model of continuing education, adults usually end up staying in their community serving as role models for other adults and children. Some of the people who have been the most effective have been middle-aged women who were simultaneously working with Head Start and taking courses part time. These people have had a great effect on the lives of children and other parents. They tend to retain their cultural sensitivity and become very effective people.

Funding Problems

- The Federal Adult Education Act functions similarly to the old vocational education program wherein states submit state plans and receive dollars for state-administered programs. However, Indian people are often left out of these plans, and there is no set-aside in the Federal Adult Education Act for Indians. It is important that Indians be included in the state plans under this particular act. We also need accountability because the states are counting our people and receiving federal dollars for them under the Adult Education Act.

- Although money for adult education is technically available through the BIA, tribes that were not able to get on the bandwagon in the very early years still have not had the opportunity to participate in adult education because monies that come out of the same pot, such as social services and roads, have taken up all of that money. A tribe cannot suddenly set aside some of those life-sustaining service needs to add adult education. Thus, the presence of the Bureau does not necessarily mean that a tribe's adult education needs are taken care of. At the same time, there is very strong agreement that, if there is support for adult literacy, then there must be some mechanism to see that every Indian adult has the opportunity to become literate and has the opportunity to participate in a culturally amenable and culturally accountable program.

- I work with the BIA in adult vocational training (AVT). Over the years AVT has sustained major cuts, and for 1992 the Bureau is undergoing another million-dollar cut in vocational training. But with the high dropout rate in California--which is up to 70 percent on some reservations--we need funding for those students. There needs to be a bridge for dropouts because they can't go right into higher education programs. Students drop out of high school at 14, 15, or 16 years of age with nothing to do, so they eventually come over to the tribe. We have tribal contracts and they'll ask for training to get into school. They apply to either the Bureau or the tribe for scholarships, but funding is not available and we have a backlog of applications. In the Sacramento area office alone, there are applications for vocational training from at least 250 people who do not have any funding. Vocational education is getting a lot bigger in California, but it seem like we're going backwards instead of forwards with the funding.

- In the BIA proposed budget, funding for AVT will be decreased by $2 million by 1992. This really concerns me because we are trying to develop our human resources, our students, and yet we do not have the necessary monies. It was mentioned that approximately 250 applicants were on the waiting list. I alone, who contract for four tribes, have at least a hundred people whom I have not been able to fund under adult vocational training, and yet the funding is going to be cut by $2 million by 1992.

Funding Recommendations

- For a number of years the National Indian Adult Education Association has advocated that there be a two percent set-aside from the Federal Adult Education Act and that the set-aside be administered as formula funding for Indian adult education both on and off the reservation. We know that there are many tribes that have never received a dime of adult education money.

II. Vocational Education

Recognizing the Need

- Approximately 65 to 70 percent of the jobs available do not require college education but do require technical training or craft skill in a trade.

- Many high schools are promoting college preparatory classes, and there are not many vocational classes for students preparing for the workforce. I think students should have a vocational option if that is what they want to do. Some students do not want to go to college. They are looking into some type of vocational training to prepare themselves for a position after they graduate.

- In the early 1970s, the Bureau educational programs were primarily vocational, and we subsequently made a major effort to get our youth into higher education. We have succeeded in increasing the academic orientation, but the question of whether we have a focus on academics or vocation is like the political pendulum that swings from conservative to moderate to liberal, then back to moderate, then conservative, and so on. This points out the need for an Indian community or tribe to realize that this is a very important question that needs to be addressed.

In Wisconsin, this is a serious question. Is the educational system going to meet the education desires of individual students? Knowing that there are going to be some students wanting to go into the trades, perhaps there should be a Y in the road so that at the junior high level they can follow either a vocational track or a higher education track. This question needs to be asked, and decisions need to be made by individual communities as they look at their unique needs--particularly by tribes that are aspiring to develop their economies; develop businesses; staff their own governmental systems, social systems, and health systems, and so forth.

- We need to address both higher education and vocational levels, and we need to keep in mind individual students and their aspirations. We need to motivate students to aspire not to $3.95 jobs but to jobs that will sustain them and their families in the year 2000.

- We have to be careful about applying national statistics to Indian country. I am referring to the comment that there are going to be fewer jobs that require a college education. When you look at tribal governments and their infrastructure, we are not a typical type of organization; we have a very sophisticated governmental structure. When the Navajo Community College first started, it had a policy of hiring outside people only for a certain period of time until some of their own people became trained in those technical or professional fields. What we are facing in Indian country is the need for highly technically trained people. We need professional people to manage our businesses and our tribal governments. Consequently, we need to encourage our students to seek either technical or professional positions that are required in tribal infrastructures.

The Federal Role in Indian Vocational Education

- There have been a number of changes in vocational technical education due to the passage of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Amendments of 1990. There will be some changes in how vocational education is provided by ED, with more emphasis on the local level as opposed to the state level. Under that act, there is a special Indian set-aside program available for federally recognized tribes. This is a competitive grant program that has funded approximately 40 projects per year in the last few years. There are also Bureau vocational education programs.

- NACIE does not review all vocational education proposals; that is done through a reading and screening process within the Office of Vocational and Adult Education. The Council does review and make recommendations on proposals under Title V of the Indian Education Act. Because there are too many vocational education proposals for the Council to read, all proposals are read and scored through a field reader process, and the scores are standardized and ranked. We start at number one and continue down spending all of the money that has been appropriated. The Office of Indian Education will tell us something like, "We will be able to fund eight or ten projects in this particular category." The Council will then review the top 12 or 13 proposals and make recommendations. We ask for more than will be funded because sometimes Council members do not feel a proposal meets the criteria.

The Relationship Between Vocational Education and Economic Development

- Our tribe went through the process of strategic planning and looked at all of the different needs on the reservation. That is why the tribe has set up an academic institution, the Navajo Community College, and also a vocational/technical institution, the Crown Point Institute of Technology.

- Everyone wants to work and be able to earn a living, but we need a skilled workforce to develop businesses and manufacturing on the reservations. Education and training are necessary to develop a skilled workforce.

- The problem with vocational education is similar to the chicken and the egg problem. There is no reason to become skilled and educated if there are no jobs to look forward to. On the other hand, areas are not going to attract industry unless there is a skilled labor force. Isn't there a connection between business and industry and education?

- I think the real issue is that of aspiration. The presence of a factory off the reservation providing $3.50-per-hour jobs (in my judgment a sweatshop condition) should not be viewed as an option for our youngsters on the reservation. This is something we have experienced on our reservations. We are able to bring onto the reservations such jobs as sewing and surging, a stitching process. Surging is a very simple, very low-technology production procedure--very boring. These kinds of jobs do not inspire or motivate young men to do anything, not to speak of finishing high school to get there. In fact, most positions in those two projects were taken over by women, both Indian and non-Indian. I think economic development and human resource development are two related processes--each one will enrich the other.

- For seven years, the Passamaquoddy tribe has received a considerable amount of Carl Perkins Indian set-aside resources. Carl Perkins special set-aside resources for Indian country are intended to be used by tribes for community-based economic development and job placement. I think it's important that we keep that feature alive in the reauthorization of that particular legislation. I understand that the language written into the 1990 amendments would allow Carl Perkins Indian vocational educational resources to be used by tribes, tribal organizations, and tribally controlled community colleges for the purpose of economic development. I have also heard that economic development does not mean job creation, an interpretation that has caused some concern among those of us in the field. We are a very isolated, rural tribe, and we do not have an existing local economy that provides jobs for tribal members. We have to use vocational educational resources very masterfully, creatively, and aggressively to create an economy. That is our strategy for developing job placements.

  When the time comes for federal officials to write the rules and regulations for that particular amendment, I think they need to keep the language flexible so vocational education resources from Carl Perkins and/or AVT resources could be readily commingled with 638 BIA adult vocational training for the purpose of broadly based development on the community level. The rules and regulations of the various categorical funding programs should be written in such a way that they encourage those in the field to be creative with the use of those monies. We don't want to be constrained by rigid rules and regulations.

- On the Navajo Reservation we don't look at vocational education as being lower than a college education. As a matter of fact, we try to promote education in every respect. We, as Indian people, should not let our young people think that, just because there is an industry or a manufacturing company across the street, they have the option of dropping out and qualifying for a job there. That is not a way to qualify for positions. When I recruit I look for people who have completed training programs and who have made a show for themselves. Even among for those who have been in the military we look for experience that they've had that would add to their career enhancement.

Labor Force Realities

- In regard to lowering the academic requirements in high schools, I think you have to take a look at the state mandates. In California, the new requirement is four years of English, and I would be skeptical about lowering those requirements considering the low Indian student test scores across the country. Statistics show that by the year 2000, the workforce will require functional levels of writing, reading, and computation skills that we do not currently have.

- With changing technology and higher skills required for employment, you need at least a two-year degree to be hired in a decent salaried position. So we are looking for our vocational students to get their degrees to enable them to be competitive in the labor market. The short-term training programs are out.

- I was going to comment on the placement requirements of vocational education grants. We look at the state need for employees, but realistically, when our students graduate from high school, they either go on to college to get their bachelor's or master's degree, or they are employed with the Indian Health Service (IHS), BIA, the tribe, or tribal contract programs. The state isn't hiring our graduates, and I don't know why. Something needs to be done about this. We are training people and educating people, and they are going back to the BIA, IHS tribal programs, or contracts that we have. Only in a few unique cases are they getting employed off the reservations. I did a job survey and placement in the three counties next to our reservation in the Highline (MT) area. In all of the state or county offices that I visited, and most businesses and banks, I never saw any visible minorities. I was told that they didn't have any open positions. But I'm always wondering how they advertise the positions, especially when I go in there and I see a new face in our local county office.

Vocational Instructors

- Many reservations have individuals who are skilled in a particular trade or vocation but are unable to teach in an institution that certifies individuals for that trade.

- Vocational instructors do not need a degree to become certified under the Arizona State Board of Education. As an alternative route to certification, instructors may go back to their former employers and get verification by letterhead correspondence that they have been working in that particular area for X number of years.

Local Vocational Education Efforts

- Under the one and one-quarter percent set-aside, we are required to look at job placements on both the local and the state level. What I did was look at the local job market as well as the state and tied them together when I submitted my application. One of the things that we looked at was a nursing program because nursing is an area of need on the national, state, and local level. We received a commitment of support from the Indian Health Service as well as from nursing care programs or nursing facilities along the Highline area in Montana. We also received a commitment of support from local teachers because of the low percentage of Native American teachers. We have an early childhood development program, and we're hoping that the students will go in as teacher's aides or continue their education in elementary or secondary education. The other program we have is business accounting, and I got a commitment of support for the tribe from businesses along the Highline area because there is a need for accountants and people working in those areas.

- In our state's vocational education system, there is constant effort by the local districts to develop coursework that meets the needs of the local communities. Invariably, what occurs is a unique experience. A professional is needed and demanded for the position, and although the state may have the course under the care and instruction of a particular instructor already in the system, as often as not they will bring in a local experienced person to teach that course. Usually it's a person who will come in just to teach that one course for the semester and get paid a certain consulting fee. This system is flexible enough to bring in the experience that is recognized and valued. For example, a small school in northern Wisconsin took a woodworking course directly out to the Lac du Flambeau reservation. They purchased equipment, placed it in a tribal center, and offered a one and a half year course in woodworking to the people from the reservation. Several times they used carpenters from the tribe to do the teaching. The rapport between the president of that school and the surrounding community was excellent, and he constantly looked for ways to take that system out and serve the community.

- One tribe in our state has put together a proposal for a discretionary grant for a tribally owned business that works on testing air, water, and soil. Even though the tribe owned the company, their own community members could not compete for many of the technical jobs that existed because they were untrained. They fully intended to make their tribal enterprise a career opportunity for their community, so they have put together a discretionary proposal for vocational education monies.

- At Mesa Community College we teach vocational skills, especially to senior citizens. At a certain age, income is not as much as it normally would be, so we have established a program to teach senior citizens how to troubleshoot because calling in a plumber or an electrician on a weekend costs time and a half or double. So we teach our senior adults how to take time for simple troubleshooting in plumbing, electrical work, and other home repairs. We also teach safety for use of appliances and other things connected with the dangers of life as a homeowner.

- I am a graduate of the Albuquerque Indian School, where we used to have vocational training in electrical work, plumbing, masonry, and construction, as well as academic courses. During my senior year, I was fortunate to be in job training with a construction company doing electrical work. I was not able to come back for the afternoon classes because the work was beyond the city limits, so the school allowed me to perform the regular eight-hour workday and go to school at night. I wonder what schools are doing for our Indian students now, and if the students are really prepared to go out and make a living after graduation. Some students may not have the finances to be able to continue school in colleges or universities, so I suggest we have a program similar to the one I went through to prepare our students to go out and face the world.

Inadequate Funding

- We need to be concerned with more than just the set-aside for Indians in the 1990 amendments because that is only a one and one-quarter percent set-aside. Over the last few years the set-aside has provided only $10 million. What can be done with $10 million to address all of the vocational education needs of Indian people? That will fund only 40 projects that must compete against each other. Furthermore, that is only for federally recognized tribes; urban Indians and non-recognized tribes have no provisions.

- Certainly, with the set-aside program, we do have a specific amount of money that is allotted to Indians. However, that set-aside provides for only 40 projects to serve all 500 of the federally recognized tribes in the country, including Alaska Native villages.

- There are not many vocational education programs on reservations or in isolated schools because there isn't money for developing those kinds of programs. Those schools are emphasizing the basic skills and classes needed to complete a high school education. Very few of them are able to offer vocational education programs.

- Vocational programs are very, very expensive to run. We don't have the equipment nor the money to buy the equipment. However, we do realize that vocational education is very much needed among the Indian people to teach the skills that will enable them to work. I'd like to know if anyone knows where we can get grants other than from the federal government. We have approached some of the local industries that are on or near the reservation, but they get asked for a lot of donations and are probably "donated out."

Other Funding Problems and Concerns

- The set-aside under the Vocational Education Act was put into place to address the problems of states and local programs not providing services to Indians. However, now sometimes when there is a set-aside program Indians are sent off to the set-aside, when under both the Vocational Education act and the Adult Education Act we as citizens of the United States have rights to those services.

- Tribes that are more progressive have a better understanding of how to acquire grants and set-asides because they have more educated people, particularly in Oklahoma, and we are concerned about the equity of the situation. Because it is such a strongly competitive program, a tribe that is able to hire a professional proposal writer would have a greater advantage and a better chance of receiving grants. It is very important that the resource and evaluation center be able to provide technical assistance under Title V not only to potential formula grantees but also to discretionary grantees, tribes, and Indian organizations so they can compete with the others.

- Tribes are required to provide a 60 percent placement under the one and one-quarter percent set-aside for the Carl Perkins Act, unlike other programs funded under this act. If there is going to be a placement requirement, why is it just for tribes? The requirement should apply to all programs.

- We are an isolated tribe, as are most tribes in California, and it is hard for us to compete for Carl Perkins funds because of our small number. Furthermore, getting a commitment of job placement as required in that application is somewhat difficult because of the lack of jobs on the reservations and rancherias.

- There is some concern among Indian vocational educators that the one and one-quarter percent set-aside might be eliminated. The Chief State School Officers and the state vocational directors are lobbying rather aggressively for the elimination of the special set-aside. Because all states have the established vocational technical institute systems that receive most of the Carl Perkins money, it is argued that we do not need the one and one-quarter percent set-aside.

  I believe that losing the set-aside would harm the efforts to meet needs in human resources development in Indian country, particularly among small, rural, isolated tribes. We need to have the one and one-quarter percent, if not an increased set-aside, to help the folks in the field develop culturally sensitive, community-based vocational programs. We do have needs that cannot be adequately met by the vocational education establishment.

- When the set-aside was first authorized, there was language indicating that the BIA would provide an equal match of funds, but this has never been done. Over the years, many tribal education departments and tribes have tried to get the Bureau to provide that match, yet each time the act was reauthorized, the language was included, but the money was not provided. I am wondering if this is going to happen again. If the language is going to be included in the act, then the Bureau should be responsible to provide that match for Indian tribes.

Funding Recommendations

- I suggest that set-aside monies be increased and freed from the competitive nature that makes one tribal entity play against another. Funding should be granted on a per capita basis. It is unfair to make one tribal group compete against another because that only divides Native Americans. Funding for both the Vocational Education Act and the Adult Education Act could be awarded on a per capita basis.

- Tribal governments have to take advantage of every financial resource available and consider federal, state, and tribal resources. The addition of private industry as a resource is very important because many industries, even small business employers, are very concerned about the lack of basic skills of the present workforce. Furthermore, tribes should not only be looking toward the BIA for vocational education and employee assistance, but should also be looking at the overall Carl Perkins Act. Tribes, in partnership with states and private industry, should look at ways and means by which vocational education can strengthen the basic workforce. If private industry is concerned about the level of education and the skills of their potential employees, we have an increased opportunity of getting their assistance in developing these programs and perhaps receiving financial assistance as well.

- I think that future federal human resources funding, grants, and contract programs should require that tribes go through the process of assessing local labor market information, attitudes of tribal members toward needed skills, and preferences for jobs. This is important in order to have vocational education programs that are culturally sensitive to work preferences on the reservation, appropriate to work values that tribal members are accustomed to, and accommodating to the skills required.

III. Vocational Rehabilitation

Problems with Funding and Services

- I'm here to ask the Task Force to consider American Indian vocational rehabilitation projects and the demise of services for our American Indians with disabilities. Vocational rehabilitation is related to adult and vocational education because sometimes clients who go through vocational rehabilitation programs are sent to vocational schools for their training. I'm a resource specialist, and there are only 14 Indian projects that exist under ED's vocational rehabilitation grants, serving only 50 tribes. The funding sources for American Indian vocation rehabilitation programs are similar to those for vocational education, with a one quarter of one percent set-aside. There should be an effort to make more tribes aware that there is funding available. Also, hopefully the funding can be increased so that more tribes can receive funding. From what I understand, out of 30 applicants only 14 were funded. Furthermore, there is a need for technical assistance. It is too large a task for only two research and training centers to provide technical assistance to the existing projects.

- The State of Arizona was the first state to start working closely with the American Indians, and the Navajo tribe was the first tribe to have a rehabilitation program. Both my undergraduate degree and my masters degree are in rehabilitation, and I'm the first Indian ever to go through those programs. I became aware that services should have existed for our Indian people with disabilities but that states have not been providing those services.

- Federal law requires Native American vocational rehabilitation programs to operate in a manner comparable to state vocational rehabilitation programs. We are required to establish cooperative agreements between the tribes and the state; however, the states are automatically funded from year to year while we are required to compete for this funding. If we are to be comparable, we should not have to compete for this greatly needed funding year after year.

- Under the vocational rehabilitation program there is language calling for a set-aside for tribes, but, from what I understand, that set-aside is not available. Tribes have to compete with everyone else when they submit their applications for vocational rehabilitation programs.

Recommendations

- Non-Indian people use supplemental security income payments (SSI) to work with state vocational rehabilitation. We can see from these people how resources were merged. If that can be done for non-Indians, it can be done for Indians as well.

- The Chippewa-Cree tribe from Rocky Boy Reservation operates the second project funded since 1985. We are requesting support for the reauthorization of the Vocational Rehabilitation Program Act in 1991.

- Some of the directors of the current 14 programs formed a professional association that wants a resolution passed for more projects to be funded. The current set-aside is one quarter of one percent, and they would like that increased so that more tribes can apply. Right now the tribes are splitting up approximately $3 million, with the Navajo tribe taking a big chunk of that because it is the biggest tribe.

  The directors of the programs would be happy even with a set-aside of one percent. Because they are now organized as directors, they are in support of each other instead of being competitive and not wanting to share. They are now taking a stand to help each other and encourage other tribes to apply for funding.

IV. Other Concerns

Funding for Indian Education Programs

- We have been pleading year after year for money, but we know that available money is not growing--it's shrinking. However, our population on the reservation is growing, and so we do need more money. I think we need to double what is already on the books. Furthermore, funding needs to be spread as far and wide as possible. I think we should know if the funding is not spread out equally because we will have problems with Indians fighting each other. We need a formula so that we can be funded equally and cover all areas: North, South, East, and West. I'd also like to see the smaller tribes considered for funding because their need is just as great as that of big tribes.

- In some school districts supplemental services for Indian children are provided out of the Indian Education Act monies, and supplemental services for everybody else are provided out of Chapter 1. In that situation, federal dollars are supplanting other federal dollars. Indian children, because of their economic status, are often eligible for services from both of those programs, and they should not be pushed into only one or the other.

- To be eligible to apply for state funds in Montana, you must either be a local education agency (LEA) or an institution of higher education. A tribe doesn't fall into either category. I've written to Washington, DC, and to the state, and they each blame the other for that specific regulation. I don't know who is responsible, but I think that regulation should be changed at the state level. When I was in Washington, DC, there wasn't anyone who could stand up and say that they received money from the state for their tribe. The only services available on reservations are those that are tribally controlled.

- There are some tribes such as the Navajo and the Hopi in which people are from the reservation but are going to public schools mainly because the families had to move into the cities due to the lack of jobs on the reservation. I wonder if there is any possibility of a head count so we could get funding from these tribes to help support their students who are going to public schools. We are not adjacent to any military post or any reservation and thus cannot draw any Johnson O'Malley funds. Perhaps we could take a head count of the students who are from the different tribes, and maybe the different tribes would like to help us in funding their students while they are in the public schools. The tribes should provide supplementary funds because public school funding is not adequate to cover the needs of our Indian students.

- I am very pleased to see that additional monies are being allocated for tribally controlled community colleges, but I am concerned about the tribes that are not located near community colleges. If our monies are now being redirected to those schools, where are we to get services?

INAR/NACIE Joint Issues Sessions
NIEA 22nd Annual Conference - San Diego, California
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"Instructional Technology"

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Summary: "Instructional Technology"

The session on Instructional Technology was chaired by INAR Task Force member Joseph Ely. The following issues and exemplary strategies were discussed:

I. Defining the Issue

- The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the use of "state of the art" teaching methods, such as using computers in the classroom, to teach students various skills.

- I'm a doctoral student and am writing my dissertation on computers and the effectiveness of computer-assisted instruction (CAI) in Native American schools. I've done some work and surveys in Arizona on the extent of CAI in predominantly Native American high schools. Some schools have shown that it can work in almost all subject areas, such as business, agriculture, and drafting, as well as remedial education. It just depends on who uses it, how they use it, and how they implement it. You need a trained staff. You might just have one computer among 30 students that will be an effective program. But you can also have 30 computers in a classroom that serves 100 students which is not very effective because the teachers don't know how to use them and have not received training. Some of the students are more proficient than the teachers.

  It's very hard to find a MacIntosh (MAC) font in Navajo for a MAC program; it just depends on how the program is developed and who's developing it--who's the key. But most computer language is not translated in tribal languages at all.

  A problem is that schools and instructors make computers boring--with repetitious and remedial stuff. But if you become really creative with computers, you can do a lot of neat things with them.

II. An Exemplary Program - Hualapai School, Peach Springs, AZ

Program Overview

- Our school is a public school in northern Arizona, serving 225 children in grades K-8. About ten years ago, we became very interested in instructional technology, and we now have three computer labs with 30 computers each. We also have a video studio with three cameras, where the students and the teachers develop videos for instructional use. A lot of the materials are student-produced videos that they have worked on in their classrooms. Also, we have a MacIntosh hook-up from the main office into all the classrooms so that the teachers have access to it. The teachers put their lesson plans on it so they don't have to make a Xerox copy for the principal.

  The students work on language, arts, and math, or any of the other software programs to reenforce what they have been taught in the classrooms. The two major programs we use are

Ideal Learning and MAC. Each of these programs has objectives, from addition to subtraction, and some have algebra. Students use it along with the textbook they have in the classroom. They like it because they get quick re-enforcement of a problem they've worked on; whereas in the classroom, if they're working in the textbook, it takes several days for the teacher to grade the paper and give it back to them. With the computers, teachers assign the objectives, and at the end of the week can pull up a printout to see the extent to which children have achieved the learning objectives.

Language Arts Program

Because our school uses a whole language approach, we have several word processing programs. After the children have written a first draft of a story or research paper in the classroom, they can type it on the word processor. The teacher can sit down with the student and edit the writing; also, students can easily do their own editing or next couple of drafts on the computer without getting frustrated by having to write it over and over. This is what we really like about word processing. There's a lot of other software we have that lends itself to the whole language program, such as Writer's Network. The children write the story, answering questions on the computer.

We have recently been trying to put our Hualapai language dictionary on the computer. We put the text on the computer and saved maybe $30 to $40 per page to get it printed because all we did was take our computer disc to the printer, who charged us only $6 to run it on his printer. A lot of the Indian tribes are getting into this; I've been to several conferences where the language is being recorded onto the computers. Computers are used to teach the language, either reading or writing, or even learning Native languages as a second language.

The computer can also re-enforce learning by asking students questions about a story they've seen on the video or on television. That's the same thing with the language. Maybe the computer will say, "My grandfather is sleeping." Then the question will say, "Who is sleeping--your grandfather, your grandmother, your mother, or your father?" So the child has to know the language in order to understand.

Conflict Resolution

The other day, I was observing in the 8th grade classroom; they were showing a program about a parent and teenager confrontation, called "Daddy's Girl." The teacher stopped the video after several minutes and said, "What do you think is going to happen?" The eighth graders start predicting what would happen--the girl slams out of the door, the father is going to yell some more, she'll run crying to her room, or she'll bring in the mother. As much as I've worked with teenagers and talked about conflict and clarification of different values with different children, I've never thought of using the computer. I thought it had a bigger impact on the students than my just standing up there and lecturing, or even with just a dialogue and a pencil or the chalk board.

There was a lot of interaction, and then the teacher would also tell them, "Write down what you think is going to happen." He did this maybe ten times during the 20-minute film. The children were involved, and I thought it was a very effective way to teach about conflicts. He wanted them to write it down so that he could go back and look at it later, after the class. It gives everyone a chance to participate rather than just one child always answering. Having the students write their own scripts is very good because there's a lot of oral language development, not only in English but in the Native language. The students are really active and taking part in their production. Just even at this conference I've noticed there are a lot of workshops on acting and dramatization and play. And everybody says that if the children take part, they learn a lot more and are re-enforced. I really believe that.

Cultural Relevance and Self-concept

I feel that if children can take the risk, they have a real good self-concept. A lot of the things we do at the school are culturally-based on the child's environment, bringing in informal learning and making it more formalized. Commercial textbooks are based on the urban community, urban society, and our children don't relate to that because they've never really been in urban areas or had those experiences.

What we're trying to do is give credit and take the child from where he is, from that environment that he's in, and make it part of the classroom. This way, we not only involve the child but the parents too. Although we may have paraprofessionals and teachers who are from the community, I tell them, "Bring in the mother. I know you know how to do it, but bring in the grandmother, bring in the aunt, so there's someone from the home coming in." As soon as a parent or relative steps into the classroom, the children want to try harder; they're always very eager to please and are proud that someone from their family has come into the classroom. That's one reason why we're trying to develop a lot of these materials--not only to preserve things that we may use later on and maintain the language, but also for the self-concept of the child.

Instructional Improvement

Having the students use computers and videos saves a great deal of time on the part of teaching personnel. When I first came to the school in 1975, I found that a lot of the curriculum wasn't uniform or there was no continuity from kindergarten to eighth grade. Now teachers have time to plan things better, organize their curriculum and lessons better, so the children can benefit. They're offering quality lessons with manipulatives, which they never had time to do before. There is a lot of interaction with the students because the students are questioning, and they're keeping the teachers on their toes by asking questions that may never have been brought up before. The students are more comfortable asking questions and taking risks in the classroom, although there is still peer pressure. We tell the children "you're here and you're guaranteed an education, and nobody can take that right from you."

Other Factors Contributing to Success

Our program is not one that was dreamed up by one person. It was a whole community thing--the tribal council, the parents, the grandparents. They've all been supportive of this program, and it's really been a focus in the community as a whole. It was a controversial issue. When I came back trying to do the language and culture in the school, the grandparents said, "What are you doing? This is unheard of." Even my mother says, "I don't even want to speak the language because I was punished for speaking it, and I saw people punished for speaking it." She understands it but won't speak it. My dad only went through the third grade, so he didn't have that inhibition. We learned the language from my grandparents and grew up speaking both English and Hualapai.

We have a program where our teacher aides go to summer school every summer, and if there were children that were limited English proficient, teachers had to get their ESL or bilingual endorsement. So our teachers were going to school too. The children see this and develop a whole different value system. They value education. And the parents see that. If they're going to work as aides, they have to commit themselves to going to school and taking college classes.

Our school is kind of like a showcase, a demonstration site where a lot of people come in and out. They always comment on the atmosphere of the school, where the children are happy, smiling, and glad to be there. We have different consultants who come in, and one was a musician who played all over the Southwest. One thing he said was, "In order to respect someone, you have to have that positive self-concept and self-respect too." It makes us happy to hear comments like that.

Before, in 1975, children always made vulgar suggestions and comments to the teachers in the Native language. That was before we had Native teachers. We've had to really stress to the children and their parents that we have to take the best from both worlds. We're trying to re-enforce values that we feel we want to perpetuate in the schools and valued from the mainstream society.

Parental Values and Support

Parents are the ones who must see that education has value. If they don't value education, if they don't want their kids at school, then that's a tremendous block that we have to overcome. Children have to want to learn. With Indian education, it's the same thing. It can't be imposed upon us like it's been for the past hundred years. We're the ones who have to make up our minds if that's what we really want.

Sharing the Culture and Involving the Elders

When I came to the school in 1975, a lot of the Spanish schools I knew as models for bilingual education were translating the whole curriculum into Spanish. When I was leaving the University of Arizona I contacted some of my Spanish colleagues, who said, "Just translate it." But I thought, "I'm not going to waste my time translating this curriculum into Hualapai. There's no way I'm going to do it because there is no continuous curriculum."

The parents and grandparents--mostly the grandparents--saw a lot of change coming about with the culture in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Because of HUD housing they were no longer with their grandchildren, transmitting the culture. So these grandparents were the ones who came to me and said, "Listen, we know you know the scientific name for the plants, so why don't you help us with our lesson? We want to teach our children about the Hualapai plants, the medicinal, the edible, and the utilitarian uses of the plant. And you teach the other, what you learned at college--the scientific name, the identification, all that." So I said, "Fine. But you have to come with me and do it in the classrooms because I don't have that knowledge." So they came and they did. They came to school every day, and we went on school trips, harvesting the plants and preparing them for storage.

From there our thematic cultural and environmental units began, and now we have a real strong ethnobotany program. When you look at ethnobotany and harvesting plants, it's not only science, it's the nutritional value. So in the fourth grade the children are doing nutritional value testing of, say, a cactus fruit, to see how much calcium and how much vitamin C and how much protein this plant has; they're also writing because they're doing research on what other cultures use that same plant--whether it was white ranchers or different tribes or different cultures within the area, or if this same plant grows in Greece or South America. They're also doing math. They're measuring. So it's just a whole integrated way of teaching, the holistic way. You can do this writing on the computer and you tie it back into technology with the video taping.

Using Video Technology

The video technology is funded through our Title V program, and our video specialist is paid out of that. But almost all of the equipment was bought by our school district. Students write their stories and they choose one that they would like to script for production of a video tape. Then they go to the studio and tape what they want. We have an editing machine for the videos where they can go in themselves and cut and paste their video tape to make the final production.

These kids are in the third to eighth grade. The video technologist has to be there to assist them, but all the teachers are also instructed in using the equipment. Each Title V classroom is required to produce one video a year.

We have six video machines that are hooked up to the classroom for instructional television. We used ASSET, which is Arizona School System Educational Television.

Impact of Technology Use

Talking about the students making their own videos and interacting with computers, do you find that this perks their interest? Does it provide enough motivation, and do they feel challenged as opposed to just a teacher in the room and no computers? Also, in comparison to just a teacher in the front of the room, is this causing the students to think more, to problem-solve more, and to interact more?

I tried to do a long-range study of our students, and I found that 53 percent of the students had either graduated or received a GED, and 53 percent had gone to college or some kind of vocational training. I really don't look at the completion because I feel that even if a student went one or two semesters to college, he or she has an experience that nobody else can take away. They can go back to school when they're 90 years old, as far as I'm concerned.

We don't place much value on achievement test scores because we feel they're based on a different culture and are culturally biased. Our children don't have a lot of those experiences. However, a lot of our children do all right on the achievement test score. The State of Arizona requires a 36 percentile score, and I would say that maybe 60 percent of our students are above that percentile. When I came to the school in 1975, the eighth graders were scoring considerably below grade level. Several years ago we graduated five eighth graders who were in the 90th percentile. Our test scores aren't significantly different than the other reservation and public schools that have bilingual education. But by the time we get to the eighth grade, our reading and math scores are higher. It shows up in the eighth grade only. I don't know why--the average is like around the 40th, 45th percentile. Part of it is probably due to the technology and the environmental curriculum using the culture and the language in the classroom and the whole language program.

This past year we had a 100 percent Indian graduation rate at the high school level. That was because these students were in our bilingual program and had been in our school six or seven years. With technology, whole language, and the environmental curriculum that we developed, our teachers had to be in in-service training almost every afternoon for several years. And when you ask the children what they are going to do when they grow up, they say, "We're going to school," because they see us in school every day and at least two nights a week.

I would choose cultural environmental curriculum and then go with instructional technology. Instructional technology is another technique, another method of teaching. You can have instructional technology in a cultural environmental curriculum. You can have whole language, too. Those are techniques and methods that you use. You can have cooperative learning, which is what we have also. We need to feel good about the language and the culture. When we were working on our ethnobotany unit, I asked one of the medicine women, "Can you come in and help us with this, some of the plants you know?" And she looked at me and said, "I go to this church, grandchild, and I can't come in." When I asked her why, she said, "Because they told me it's the devil's work." That really hurt me. I told her, "When you look at these doctors and scientists, they're inventing these medicines, and you say that's devil's work?" I tried to convince her that that wasn't the devil's work; it was knowledge. A couple of months later, she came back and helped us in the classroom. But she never went back to church, and I felt bad about it because she thought that she had to choose between helping the children at school, and the church.

I just want to say that in February 1990, my three daughters and I had an opportunity to tour the Hualapai school, and my kids were just flabbergasted. They wanted to move to Peach Springs so they could go to school and take advantage of this technology.

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"Urban Indian Education"

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Summary: "Urban Indian Education"

The issue session on Urban Indian Education was hosted by INAR Task Force member David Beaulieau. The following concerns, recommendations, and exemplary programs were discussed:

I. Overview of the Issues

- Nearly half of all Indian students in the country are in urban areas, and a vast majority are in public schools. In the area where I come from in the twin cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, the statistics that define what is wrong with Indian education are really extreme to the degree that we think if we were able to solve the problems of Indian education in the city, we'd have them licked statewide. Certainly we are making progress in rural reservation areas, and there is a lot to be done there, but the issues seem to be very extreme in the city. The context is also somewhat different in the city: we typically have very large school districts, and Indians represent a very small percentage of the overall student population. We also have the context of desegregation and the general thrust for minority education in this country being implemented intensely in urban areas. And, of course, we understand that policy is somewhat different than that with which we are familiar in terms of Indian education, because it rests on different political and legal foundations and has a different heritage.

- Most Native Americans live off the reservation; yet many programs are only offered on reservations, especially vocational education. We are often overlooked in the urban areas and cannot apply for other funding.

- Statistics on dropout rates, the number of students in special education, and other related issues always seem to be more severe in urban areas. They also seem more severe among young Indian males than females.

- I have a friend on the reservation who is 19 years old, and he is just a junior in high school. He is in school but it's taking him a while to graduate. I support the idea that boys drop out or lag behind more than girls. My grandmother was the first Indian to graduate from high school in Washington State. All of her granddaughters graduated on time, but some of her grandsons did not graduate.

- Omaha is very unique with two reservations located about 70 miles away; the Omaha Reservation and the Winnebago Reservation. The people from the reservations along the north side of South Dakota are always coming into the urban area. Those are the populations that we have to address. It may sound simplistic, but they're almost like "boat people" when they come in. I can give you one example where a father came in his station wagon. He had lost his wife and had about six children ranging in ages from two to sixteen years old. He worked his way down from South Dakota going from town to town earning gas and food money. They ended up on our front doorstep in Omaha. I got them a place to stay and provided them food, shelter, and other such things. It's almost as bad as a boat person coming from Southeast Asia.

I've served on the President's Advisory Committee, the Multicultural Education Committee, and our local Title V parent committee. In Omaha we have a working relationship with the superintendent. In fact, when we had our national board meeting in June, we invited him to come and talk to the main board, and he came. The working relationship is all right, but Nebraska is a very conservative state and you have to deal with that. You have to learn to get around it. Sometimes it ends up almost like a cowboy-and-Indian confrontation. We are tying to involve the superintendent in our national conference. We recently hired a new Title V director and we're trying to work with her on our youth substance abuse program. Through her we are also working with the school districts on a dance troupe and basketball teams at the boys' club. We have a continuous struggle with the school district on addressing the minority needs. Even the black and Hispanic children have trouble. It's a continuous hassle.

Also we are dealing with migrant people who are coming back and forth from the reservation. They say we have a very high dropout rate, but the reservation is so close that little Johnny may be staying with his grandmother part of the year and coming back to Omaha the other part. There is no tracking system, and he may be going back and forth to South Dakota.

There is just not enough money available for the Indian program. They've got a full-time, underpaid coordinator and a half-time counselor. The half-time counselor is so swamped that she has to go out into the community almost all the time. And then if she isn't Indian, people are not going to let her into the house. There are some white counselors making $40,000 a year and it's really a sad situation. You just really have to go to Omaha to get a feel for how things are. The dominant system is more willing to serve the blacks or the Hispanics than the Indian people. Other groups feel sorry for us so once in a while we have to link up with those other groups to get something done.

The general assumption is that just because a person moves away to an urban area, he or she has a good job and doesn't have any problems or needs. However, the needs are just as bad or even worse because you also have racism and discrimination to deal with. There is really a need for programs for our young. Our preschool children are the ones who are really being lost in the urban area. It took one tribe four years to get a preschool program. I don't know when Head Start comes up for reauthorization. It's already written in Head Start that tribes are eligible to have a Head Start program, but urban Indian organizations cannot have Head Start programs. That is where we are facing a problem. Drug and alcohol abuse programs are willing to give X amount of dollars to Indian programs, but Head Start is not. Tribal programs have Region VI through set-asides, but urban Indian organizations do not have that opportunity. We can continue to go after JOM and Title V, but those funds are so small that they just don't address all of our needs.

My final request is that urban Indian organizations and Indian centers should not be forgotten or neglected. I've sat as an administrator for a tribe, and there wasn't a two or three day period when an RFP didn't come across my desk. All I had to do was see if it was feasible and then go after that money. When you're out running an urban center, those RFPs don't come across your desk. You're out there hustling just like the black, Hispanic, or Asian minorities, and so it's very competitive. Furthermore, those people are experts, while we are barely getting started. What I am saying is that the urban organizations need to be given a level playing field so we can compete with anyone.

- Many Indian students leave the reservations or their Native communities to go to school or find jobs elsewhere. This is something I've done myself. I'm a Laguna Pueblo Indian and I live in Oklahoma, so I feel like I'm out of my element. I live there because that is where my job is. I feel like we need to return to our home communities and work to establish those things we have learned elsewhere. I feel that as soon as I could go back, if I had the opportunity, I would return to my Native land. I feel that is real important because I see many Indian students who leave their homeland and don't ever return.

II. Funding

Sources of Funds

- There are a number of sources of dollars available specifically for urban Indians. We have Indian Education Act monies, Title V entitlement, that come to urban areas. We also have other federal programs that are generally available to all other students. Indians are a part of the population that generates eligibility for those funds. Certain urban areas receive Johnson O'Malley dollars. Those are dollars that are contracted by tribal governments to school districts. There are certain requirements for schools to receive JOM, funding including being on or near a reservation. The BIA recently defined Minneapolis as being on or near a reservation so we now have a JOM contract. There are certain urban areas that, by their location and proximity to reservations, also receive Impact Aid money. These are not specifically for Indians, although they may be tied up in the regulations that require tribal and parental input into the expenditure of those dollars.

  In Minnesota and in other areas, state dollars are specifically set aside for Indians. In Minnesota we have state grant programs for Indian education. One is in language and culture education; the other is for high school postsecondary preparation programs which are exclusively for American Indian students and are offered on a competitive basis.

- Indians are eligible for Title VII--the Bilingual Education Act. Some urban areas with significantly large populations of Indian students, such as Albuquerque and Phoenix, have separate Title VII bilingual education programs. These funds are for bilingual or multicultural education and can be used for staff development, so that is an area that people need to start urging their schools to look into.

Problems

- One of the things that urban Indians face is the numbers game. We have about 5,000 Indians in Omaha in comparison to New Mexico, Oklahoma, California, and Arizona, which have hundreds of thousands. When the funding agencies start looking at proposals, they still go with the numbers, because that's the way the system works. How are these dollars going to be effective? They are going to be more effective addressing 100,000 instead of 5,000. The numbers preference is true with the foundations and churches, but I also think it probably applies to Title V and JOM.

- Whenever we get into monies that aren't specifically set aside for Native Americans, the purse string is controlled by the dominant entity--which is probably the state--and there is very little input from the Native American population. Because the Native American population does not interact with those entities controlling monies which are not specifically designated to include Native Americans, Native Americans can be brushed aside. Furthermore, there is no confirmation that Native Americans are being served by these funds other than by having the programs indicate that they have satisfied the regulations and requirements requested on paper. There needs to be an agency to confirm that Native Americans are a part of those programs.

  Title V monies are treated like state-owned funds and they are controlled through the school board. Although they may say X number of minorities participate in it, we need some way to confirm what is taking place, especially as it concerns the urban areas. At the moment they simply satisfy the guidelines and the paperwork, and there is no other confirmation.

- When you do not specifically earmark monies for Native Americans, and when Native Americans are expected to go out and penetrate the political machine, it's stymied from the beginning. School boards may be responsive to the dominant group depending on the locale--in San Francisco it is Orientals, in Chicago it is blacks. Our concern is that the numbers of Native Americans are not great. We know it's a numbers game and if you don't earmark those monies for Native Americans, they won't get their fair share.

- Certain federal programs do have set-asides but I think we are going to have to go one step further. Tribes have treaties with the United States government and so they have clout in Washington. I know they can get a lot of things done just by asking. But we also have the urban Indian. The system says that the BIA and IHS are going to take care of urban Indians, but the BIA and IHS say that the tribes are their priorities and thus the tribes will get all of the money. They are starting to provide urban programs--IHS has urban projects and BIA has JOM and Title V--but you can almost count on one hand the programs urban Indian people are eligible for from Washington, ANA, and JTPA. You almost have to have set-asides within those Indian programs. It doesn't even have to be written in as long as people understand that we are Indians regardless of where we live. When I was on the council in Oklahoma, those Indians living in Oklahoma City or Tulsa were part of our tribe, and I tried to make scholarship monies available for the people who lived there.

III. Educational Programs

Recommendations

- I'm the JOM chairperson for Claremore schools in Claremore, Oklahoma. We primarily serve a suburban school district. We should have some sort of Indian education program at the state level to serve Indian students. A large majority of our students are Cherokee, but we do have students from all different tribes and from all parts of the country, and we don't have any formal type of instruction for these students. The only Indian education program we have is funded through JOM, and the instructors are recruited on either a voluntary basis or on contract. Most of those programs are primarily directed toward arts and crafts, but I feel that leadership skills, political issues, and history need to be taught to our children because these urban and suburban students are losing their sense of our culture rapidly.

States need to be more open to the fact that we do need Indian education programs, especially where there are large numbers of Indian students in their classrooms. I don't feel as though our school system is willing to deal with Indian programs right now.

We have not established a way to incorporate Indian studies in the school system as a whole. The JOM program does implement some cultural activities, but they are strictly related to arts and crafts. Our parent committee was newly incorporated last July, so we have not really established any groundwork to implement programs with the school board. Our school wanted to eliminate the JOM program because it was administratively burdensome, so we already feel that there is going to be a little bit of animosity towards us if we request any changes. I think there is mild hostility but I think it can be resolved. I think we just have to go through different avenues to do so. It would help if we had some sort of backup from Indian education agencies saying that states serving Indian students need to provide at least a day or so of Indian education a week.

- Because of my interest in dance, performing arts, and creative arts, I was encouraged in the 1970s to go back to school so I could participate in Indian education in urban areas. Hopefully, Indian youth have an experiential love for arts and crafts, music, and movement and that it is a part of who they are. But they're trying to discover who they are in a new urban setting. I think we need to reach out and find out the interests of students. It's not always money that we need. We must see what we can offer in new ways to our youth in terms of the activities that speak to their tradition in urban settings.

- Because there are different agencies that provide services to American Indians, we are visualizing a consolidation of those services or an intertribal or interagency group so that we are not in competition. We also have one agency that does preview the Federal Register for us.

Existing Programs

- I'm associated with the Intertribal Friendship House. The Native American population within Oakland is very minor, and consequently they tend to keep a low profile. In Oakland, they don't actually have a community itself; they live interspersed with other ethnic groups like the Cambodian, and Laotian people that came over on boats. The schools themselves are overpopulated with minorities from different ethnic groups so it is somewhat hard to bring the Indian community members together. Programs in which other ethnic groups participate tend to be diluted and break apart.

Oakland public schools have a summer school program; all of the Indian students who need help attend, earn credit towards graduation, and do well. It carries them over; it's a bridge for the following year. They have high participation in the summer school. On the other hand, when tutoring activities are diluted by other ethnic groups, participation is low, or they break up. These are some of the urban problems that occur when the Indian population is somewhat insignificant.

The summer program is funded through Title V. However, I think that is being depleted this year, and there is a possibility that we might not continue the summer program. The tutoring program, which the agency is picking up, doesn't have any money, but we're going ahead to try to consolidate a program. We rely on other agencies in Oakland for funding.

The Intertribal Friendship House does not have any direct contact with the Oakland public schools. We are trying to establish a partnership with the school district so that we can in cooperate in some kind of funding program.

Although the Santa Barbara Urban Indian Health Project doesn't have funds, we decided to contact the families and encourage them to call school counselors if they had concerns about students' grades. We have children starting to come for afterschool counseling, and the staff salary is coming from some other funding source. We are going to tutor students and prove that there is an Indian community.

In order to encourage our junior and senior high school students, we're going to look into junior achievement clubs. They have nothing whatsoever to do with Indian programs in our school district but could be a source to bolster community relations and community networking. That is the route we're going to try to keep kids interested in staying in school and to give them something related to their personal interests.

Title V

I am a project specialist for Title V Indian education program in the San Lorenzo School District, an urban area. As a group we feel we are academically deficient, but through the Title V programs the students do improve. There are 35 different tribes in our districts; we want to be recognized as Indians and as a valuable part of this nation. We don't want to be identified as Anglo. Districts do recognize the need for Indian education, but small districts are strapped financially. Educational costs in California are three times higher than in other areas across the nation. It's important to mainstream, to fit in global education and multiethnicity, but we should recognize Native Americans as their own group.

San Lorenzo has a computer program that we are going to hook up with Educational Native American Network (ENAN) out of Northern University. ENAN has told us that they will pay for all costs of the computer program, and we will supply the modem so that we can hook up with the university to communicate with our Indian parents, administrators, students, and staff. This is a project that we're very excited about. We will share information and any educational tools that we have.

We want to continue to be Native Americans, whether it's in an urban or reservation setting, and hopefully we will continue to do so both academically and culturally through the Title V programs.

Two percent of the student body in the San Lorenzo School District is Native American. The San Francisco Bay Area (especially the San Francisco schools) have 6,000 newcomers from

Europe and Asia a year, and so our district has 500 new LEP students right now. The area has an over 50 percent minority population. There are plans to create committees to deal with the minority backgrounds. I have an Indian museum and resource center and have just recently trained 27 school teachers on Native American culture, history, and education, especially Title V.

The Title V project I am involved in as a student performed at an A's game. The active members got buckskin dresses that are worth $1,000 or more. I've been involved for about five or six years. When I was younger we used to bead. We do a lot of things and it's really important to me. It's special. In the San Lorenzo School District there are two high schools, Royal High School and San Lorenzo High School. I know all the people from Royal High, but there are not many people who are active and participate from San Lorenzo High. We do a lot of things, and we have fieldtrips. We get together on Christmas and we exchange gifts and sing songs.

- Someone said that there was a problem with the parents getting their children involved in school activities. However, right now I see no problem. My dad doesn't like me going to the powwows because he likes to stay at home, but my mom is involved. My mom is the chairperson for the parent committee in the districts and so she tries to keep involved. I don't really know how parents can get involved; it's mainly up to the student.

Identification Issues

- One of the things that prohibits participation in programs is the identification of Indian students. You have these 506 forms that need to be filled out before they are recognized. I have to carry around a card identifying me as a Creek Indian and that bothers me. It's really a problem of identifying those Indian children for whom these monies can be appropriated. If there hasn't been a 506 form made out on a student, as I understand it, he or she will be identified either as Filipino or Hispanic rather than American Indian.

- The Santa Barbara Urban Indian Health Project, is just beginning an outreach program to try to meet the needs of our Indian population in the schools. Title VII uses the home language survey, and the computer will only select one ethnicity. Maybe a child is American Indian and Hispanic, but the district personnel make no attempt to assist a parent in determining which group they choose to identify as. We have nothing in our area to encourage families to identify as Indian so we are starting traditional drumming, dancing, and singing and hope to have a mini-powwow in our area. We don't have a Title V program because the school district didn't have it, but we hope to get Title V monies by next spring, which may come through to us as a community agency.

III. Indian Gangs

- Nobody has addressed the development of Indian gangs in urban areas. In Minneapolis we have organized Indian gangs that are competing with black and Hispanic gangs. There was a woman who testified in one of the other sessions about the development of Indian gang activity in Tucson.

- I attended a parent meeting at the Intertribal Friendship House and they brought in some police officers addressing that very question. American Indian gangs are not in the immediate area, but they do join other gangs. There is no imminent danger of having Indian gangs in the near future. That was somewhat of an issue for us as we were wondering where the dropouts went and if they were disappearing into gangs. That is one issue we would like to address with the school district as well.

- We have a different kind of gang problem in Omaha. The Bloods and the Cripps are in Omaha and the young Indian children join them. We've had a couple of cases where they try to drop out of the gang, but those Cripps say the only way to go out is if we kill you. The Indians had to move back to the reservation just to get away. The Indian population is not large enough for the Indian students to actually run in gangs.

  This all relates to the central issue of funding. Every summer we have softball teams and we come up with some money to buy them cheap uniforms of T-shirts with a name on it. The parents bring the girls to practice and to ball games. The boys are going through another organization this year, but we're going to buy them uniforms. They won't be the most expensive, but we will pay their registration and it will keep some of those Indian teenagers off the street.

  If we had a grant to address teenage youth, we would be able to have a counselor to go out there hustling and bring them in. It always goes back to the person who is running the program and whether or not he or she is dedicated to put in the extra effort. Committed people are out there, but they also have to make a living. It's hard to come up with something unless you actually have some money.

IV. Influencing the System

- You are asking us to try to influence a curriculum, but the body we must travel through is political. Until now, Native Americans have resisted the intermeshing of Indian culture with the dominant society which is done through the political process. Title V monies aren't being properly used due to the fact that Native Americans do not intermesh with the political system. The school boards are political. I've heard that argument raised in every session I've attended. But I'm also going to say the same thing I said in those sessions. When there is no political intermeshing between Native Americans and the school boards, the Native American eliminates the possibility of influencing the curricula of the subjects being taught.

  Instead of labeling total monies under minority, I would suggest that you define X number of dollars for Native Americans and that Native Americans have a say as to how that money is allocated. Speaking from a Comanche perspective, I would suggest that Comanche history be taught, without a yes or no from the school board. I would also like to see the tribal entity have responsibility for setting the qualifications of who teaches Comanche history. If the state gets hold of the program, the first thing they will say is that "you are not qualified to teach," and consequently the program will not go anywhere. When you start to suggest these things, element after element comes into play. Native Americans must be in control rather than go through the political body that we must go through to take advantage of programs the way they exist now.

- Tribal leaders do not have a lot of clout when they go to Washington, DC. There is no mechanism for tribal leaders to function as sovereign nations on a government-to-government level. If the chairs from every group decide an issue can't be solved, they load up and go to Washington on their own initiative. Whether or not they're granted an audience there with the proper people is questionable, but that's the way business has been conducted since they put our people on reservations. We need to get a mechanism in place where we can deal on a government-to-government level. We're through with Indian agents. If we're talking sovereignty, let's deal sovereignty. Until we get that mechanism in place, we're always going to be dealing at this level where we have to come to these kinds of committees to get our problems solved.

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"Parental Involvement"

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Summary: "Parental Involvement"

The first session on parental involvement was co-hosted by INAR Task Force Co-Chair Terrel Bell and NACIE Council member Jim Shore. The second session on this issue was co-hosted by INAR Task Force member Byron Fullerton and NACIE Council member Omar Lane. The following issues, recommendations, and exemplary programs were discussed:

I. Recognizing the Need

The Importance of Parent Empowerment

- A key to student achievement is to get parents involved in the education of their children. Even parents who don't know a lot about the subject matter can provide a good place for their children to do homework, reserve time for it, and have an opportunity for their children to study at home. Parents can talk about school and schoolwork with their children on a regular basis, encourage them, motivate them, and shape their attitudes about school and learning. In this process, parents will become closer to their children and have a better working relationship with them.

- I would like to distinguish between parent involvement and parent support. Parent involvement requires parents to be involved as committee members, policymakers, Title V advisors, and even tutors. On the other hand, parent support programs such as Family Math and Family Science build upon what parents can do for a child. Because our parents haven't come through the system with the kind of skills that they need in terms of parenting, we haven't been very good at giving them concrete things they can do with their children. When you actually get parents and children together having fun around a content area like Family Math or Family Science, you start breaking down some of the barriers and fears that parents grew up with. They want to be there for their children but nobody has ever shown them how to in very concrete, enjoyable, supportive kinds of ways.

- The BIA has had a record of taking our Indian children away from their communities and sending them to schools 100 miles away. That was a deliberate effort on the governments' part to assimilate and indoctrinate these children. We need to turn this around and let the family and parents assume more responsibility.

- Educators across the nation seem to be using parental choice as a front or a reason to allow students to go to schools of their choice, but many times those students will go to no less than two schools in a year. We have three BIA schools within a radius of 50 miles that are surrounded by a public school system and we have kids leaving our school within the first three months to go elsewhere. However, they end up coming back to our school because it is close to their home and their community. We end up receiving those kids back in late March or April, and we don't know if we should promote them. I agree that parents should have a choice of where to send their children, but the problem is that the students are the ones making those decisions. We need to form a partnership with parents so they trust the schools and don't leave the choices up to their children.

A Policy Context

- Changes for parents and schools must occur at the policy level. I have been involved in lawsuits where parents present horrible things that are going on, but if they sue, all they win is a declaration that says the horrible thing must stop. However, they still have to figure out what to do and what kinds of curriculum and materials are going to replace the problem material. And this must all happen in the context of a changing, hostile staff. There really needs to be an ongoing policy basis for doing that.

Current Lack of Parental Involvement

- On many Indian reservations, parental involvement starts during Head Start but deteriorates by the end of middle school. However, those are very crucial times when our parents really need to give support and assistance to the youth who are facing adolescence.

- I am a parent and was involved in Head Start because of the parent involvement component written into that program. However, when our son went into kindergarten, our involvement tailed off. I don't know if that was because we were intimidated by the teachers, if we were somehow discouraged from participating, or if we were made not to feel welcome.

Parental Responsibility for Teaching the Culture

- I was wondering about parents and how much they should participate in school. I know that a lot of people believe schools should teach Native American culture, but I think that should begin at home. When students go to school, they should already have a very strong understanding of their culture and heritage. We used to take our kids to the supermarket have them pick out the different foods that the Indians contributed to society. We also taught them the old legends and stories. Maybe our family is different because we have a functional family with parents and grandparents. They took an avid interest in the culture and read about the Indians in Mexico. This summer we went to the desert where there was a ball court and my kids determined that the Indians had calculated the parabolic reflex of this court. They had read in National Geographic about how the Indians did that so they could stand on two temples and whisper and hear each other's communication. Culture and heritage should come from the home so that when they go to school they have a better understanding of their own self.

II. Suggestions for Encouraging Parental Involvement

Establishing Trust

- Based on my experience working with Indian families from one of the Pueblo communities in New Mexico, I know that getting parents involved takes time--it is not something that will happen overnight. Once parents trust you, know you, and know what you think, it is easier for them to decide to attend parent meetings. I work directly with many of the parents in the Pueblo community. In the beginning there were parent meetings that sometimes no parents, or only one parent attended, but I kept going back. Once I was able to establish trust and a good relationship, parental involvement increased.

- In developing relationships with parents, schools may initially have to deal with considerations that are different from their original goals. Schools need to listen to what parents are thinking rather than only following their own agenda, because what concerns parents at a particular time might be different from what schools think should concern them. However, if schools first address what concerns parents, even if it seems irrelevant, then parents will be ready to move on to other items and that is when schools can make their own suggestions.

- We need to involve parents by asking for their opinions and having them analyze what previously has and has not worked, and brainstorm solutions. In my work with parents as a community development counselor, this approach has helped me succeed. Instead of me talking to them, I try to elicit their input by asking, "What do you think? What has worked and what has not worked? Why hasn't it worked and what are some possible solutions?" Once parents realize that they have solutions within themselves and within their communities, they don't need to go to outside sources as much as they might have in the beginning. Many times solutions are right there within the communities themselves and it just takes time for parents to realize that they have tried something that works. Once they realize that many things are possible, they start to feel good about themselves.

The Importance of Outreach

- The more administrators, teachers, and parents go out into the community, the more parents will become involved. Our district is in central Phoenix where 90 percent of our people are below poverty level. We are starting to get more parents involved simply because we have some parents who go door-to-door to talk to other parents. Title V and Johnson O'Malley staff should contact the parents directly. There are not many educated Indians or qualified staff, and they don't have much time available, but to really make a difference, we need to actually go into homes and talk with parents. We need to keep letting them know that the schools are going to support them and help them as much as possible. I see some of these parents start to come out and check on their children, or visit the school. If our educators have such expertise, and they are good speakers and dynamic people, they should visit the homes more often rather than staying in their offices.

- As a principal, I want my teachers to get out into the homes and visit with the parents. You really don't know how to meet a child's needs unless you know where he or she is coming from. However, when I announced that I expected every teacher to at least make one home visit, they shied away from it. I think we need to do more of those kinds of things because parents think that they are not accepted by the schools. The parents we have now are people who have gone through strict BIA boarding schools that did not allow the students to speak their own language. These parents feel abused by the system and feel they have no choice but to send their own kids there. They think that their kids are experiencing the same things. These parents are intimidated by the system because of their own experiences. To overcome the intimidation, we need to go into their homes and let them know that we accept their lifestyle, and therefore, we will surely accept their children.

At my school, in addition to requiring teachers to go out and meet the parents, I have brought the adult education that used to be held at our community center right into my school. The whole effort is to get more parents familiar with and involved in the school. We will also focus on a specific type of training to develop our parent group as a working functional parent group, rather than just a general parent assembly.

III. Barriers to Parental Involvement

Institutional Factors

- We can all pretend that there is a wonderful partnership between schools and parents, but there is not. When you come in with a problem, you can bet that the institutional response is that your child has been a problem. Then they start focusing in on your child because this is how many institutions protect themselves. If you are educated and know how the system works, you can respond to that. If you are not, the school shuts the door and pegs you and your child as troublemakers. I think it's asking a lot to expect parents, who aren't comfortable in this foreign setting anyway, to go in there and assert themselves and demand change.

- Often we think in negative terms about parents coming to school and being involved. When parents come to school, you wonder why they are there. Are they there because a child is in trouble? Are they there because they are upset and angry with the school or the teacher?

- We, as parents, don't feel welcome in public schools. In fact, when I go to schools, it's always because my child was not listening or some small reason, and I'm sure there are bigger problems faced by other parents.

- I regret to say that the public school system has been abusive to my children physically and emotionally. I've tried to work with the school system, and I've talked to many other Indian parents who have tried to work with them. Most of the time when they ask you to work with them, it is regarding a discipline problem. Sometimes a death in the family occurs, and my children have to be out two or three days, and they are punished for supporting their family and its values. Regarding physical abuse, my daughter recently broke her wrist. I sent a note to school and told the teacher that she was not to write. I didn't realize until three weeks later that the teacher made her rewrite another paper with her right hand, the one that was broken. Finally, I took a doctor there and even then the teacher was hollering at us. As a last resort I took my daughter out of school and that really did a lot of emotional damage to her. Now what I have to do is rebuild again what the teacher has torn down.

- I went to visit Chemawa with my mother because my grandmother had gone there. We walked into that place and the secretarial area was built up at least a foot, maybe two feet, off the floor from the reception area so that when the secretary came up and talked to us, she looked down over this counter. And my mother, this adult person whom I always thought of as being forward, could not talk. That, I think, is a trained, learned response. When schools are all designed that way, how do you expect Indian people to come in, take control, and develop policies and curriculum? There are horrible breakdowns in communities that need to be regenerated.

- As a parent, I really resent homework. My kids are in school five to seven hours a day. How come when they come home I have to spend a half hour to an hour with each child going over homework? And not only that, if I don't sign off, my children will be punished and will not receive credit for their homework. I do agree that if a parent is involved, the child is going to do fine. But if a parent is not involved and you set up systems to attempt to generate parental involvement without responding to the realities of the community, you are going to get people who cannot comply with your strategies because they come from dysfunctional families or from families that are not educated in the institutional sense. Consequently, you get children who are failing not because they can't do the work in school, but because they're not bringing back signed papers from their parents. Maybe they live with other family members or with their brothers or sisters, or their parents are out working or abusing alcohol or drugs. You doom that child to failure by imposing strategies that don't respond to the realities of what the child needs to deal with.

- My children are in school from five to seven days a week. If the schools cannot teach a kid to read in that time, then after I get off work I have to teach them. So what you mean by parental involvement is something that concerns me because what you are really talking about is blaming parents for the failures of not just Bureau schools, but all schools, and I object strenuously to that.

- There needs to be a certain perspective when talking about training for Indian parents. If you want input on curriculum, you need to teach parents what curriculum means and how it is applied in the classroom. Parents also need training in order that families and community systems can be rebuilt and strengthened on the basis of love, affection, and support. It really offends me to have people say we need parental involvement and our problems exist because parents are not involved. For centuries this country has implemented programs through the educational system that were designed specifically to destroy those systems that they now say we need in order to turn around our horrible problems.

- Many of our Title V programs either do not have sufficient funding for a community liaison person at all, or district employees are coerced to conform to the system to keep their jobs. I suggest that Impact Aid and Title V statutes require community liaison persons who are members of the Indian community to act as advocates for Indian families. It should be clear that their role is one of advocacy and trying to keep the kids in school.

Parental Factors

- Sometimes parents fail to provide emotional support for their children. When I ask students what they would really like from their parents, many say love. This includes both emotional support and social support. If parents could provide love, I think their children could go a little bit further and parents need to understand that. They can buy school supplies or even a car for their children, but they need to give that emotional support. The State of New Mexico sponsored a conference several years ago in Santa Fe and there was a dialogue between the Elders and the younger generation. One Elder stood up and asked what the younger generation wanted from them. A panel of students responded that they wanted love, hugs, and kisses. This is what kids are looking for. I am not suggesting we should overwhelm the children with love and spoil them, but there is a correct guidance that a parent could give a child.

- Some children are being taken care of by their grandparents because their parents are out working or looking for jobs. It is hard for old people to be involved with education because they themselves are not educated and don't understand the system.

IV. Parent Projects That Work

School Initiated Efforts

- The Mesa Public Schools (AZ) have gotten parents involved and feeling comfortable with principals and teachers through a Hemako Govk'cuth, or home-school festival. This is held at the beginning of each year to bring the school staff out into the community to meet people on their own turf. Within the last two years this has been successful in bringing our parents out to participate. It is organized like a carnival festival where schools and tribal youth programs set up booths, hand out information, and speak with parents and teachers on an informal basis. In addition to the booths, the schools have worked with the students to provide some type of presentation, and a meal in the evening. The first year of the festival 150 parents attended. The next year parental attendance was up to 450.

- The White Mountain Apache reservation has established a regular series of parent/teacher conferences. Every nine weeks the school is recessed half a day and conferences are held from 1:30 in the afternoon until 6:00 in the evening. All of the parents are welcome to come into their child's classroom to discuss their child's situation and go through the grading system. The parent has a chance to be involved with the school and to understand their child's placement. Furthermore, parents receive their child's report card at these conferences. Parent involvement becomes strong at those meetings, and pretty soon they start influencing different areas. Parents are also involved through the parent policy council, parent advisory committee, and parent/teacher visitation in which all the parents at all levels, kindergarten through high school, have a chance to experience their children's classrooms.

  Because parents like to get involved in a little recreation, we always have an activity during our parent advisory committee meetings. We usually put up a volleyball set before we start our meeting and then after we go through our agenda, we have an activity with parents. We, as parents, sometimes like to challenge our high school students and pretty soon we include our young students in our activity. Children also really like to challenge their parents. This has really become a big area of involvement.

Activities for our younger population, such as Head Start, are those where the real serious parent involvement takes place. We have a little youth basketball tournament which is a major fundraising activity for parents.

A lot of our parents get involved in sports events. During basketball games, our community fills the gyms. Even though it might not be in a classroom setting, parents are out participating with their children. When the children see their parents participating in these activities, they feel motivated.

Instructors and administrators need to be enthusiastic about parental involvement. The White Mountain Apache had a principal who was chosen principal of the year throughout the United States, and this principal has really encouraged a lot of parents to become involved in school activities.

When the Heart of the Earth Survival School in Minneapolis had a change in administration, parent involvement was very low. This was a special issue that parents and administrators felt needed to be addressed. They have since implemented changes and their parent involvement has doubled. The school now requires parents to come to the school for at least one of their special events. We utilize traditional practices such as feasts where we have presentations by our drum and dance club. Parents sign in to show they are present, and our lunch room gets very crowded. This helps build the trust level because parents come to the school and feel comfortable and welcome. They are not just there because their child is in trouble or because there is a problem--they come on a good note.

Another thing we do in our school is to utilize traditional counseling or sweatlodges. We are located in the middle of the city, but have a sweatlodge that is only ten miles away from our school. We hold them on Friday nights, and the parents who are trying to overcome any kind of drug or alcohol problem are able to attend. They attend as a family with their children, and with their children's friends and families. They can go to a sweat and learn about their own culture and practices.

Other tactics we use to encourage parent involvement include a schoolwide parent newsletter that the teachers can contribute to, and some of the teachers developed their own newsletters such as the first grade parent newsletter. There is a lot of parent-teacher interaction because of open houses and feasts, and the parents are welcome to see the classrooms and interact with the teachers. Another thing that we do is provide transportation. If there is a problem with a student or if there is going to be a recognition of the student, we provide transportation for that parent. We have also developed a parent involvement coordinator whose number one job, goal, and objective is to retain and increase parental involvement.

Another component that has worked for us is the State of Minnesota Act 295, which requires a preassessment team be established for chemical dependency. Parental involvement is encouraged in any recommendation that is made for addressing a student's particular problem. If the problem requires treatment, the parent has to be involved. We keep in close contact with the student and parents and track the students's progress. If a student is sent for out-patient treatment, we require a parent conference before he or she is allowed back into the school.

We also utilize parents in the decisionmaking process. Our board is parent controlled, and the parent advisory committee plays a very important role in the decisionmaking process at this school.

- "Preparing for the Drug Free Years" is probably one of the best parent support programs that I've come across. This program not only deals with how parents can anticipate the problems that their children are going to have around drugs and alcohol, but it also focuses on what they can do within the family structure to build support, create the needed bonding, and encourage the specific skills it takes to say no to drugs.

- At the White River Unified School District (AZ), we have a parent/teacher counselor who goes out and visits with the people in the community. We have young girls who got pregnant before they were out of high school and find it very difficult to go back and walk the halls that they walked maybe a year or two ago. When they go back, they think that they made a mistake and realize that their parents made the same mistake. You have to talk to them. We also have very concerned teachers who during the summertime will go out on their own and visit the children that they will have the following year. Our parent advisory committee holds potlucks as another method to bring parents out.

- I am a certified drug counselor and currently a parenting specialist with the Chinle public schools (AZ) which is the largest public school system on the Navajo reservation. I set up an in-house referral system within the school and made a referral form for teachers to identify students who have behavioral problems, who might be undernourished, who are wearing the same clothes for three days, or who are suspect of being abused or neglected. From the teacher, the students go through the principal or the nurse who does a lot of physical investigation, and then I provide individual counseling and make assessments on these students. As a parenting specialist, I then go out to the home to gather information. Sometimes I find the parents are drunk, divorced, dysfunctional, or even deceased. I then call a case conference with the school social workers and we develop a treatment method. A lot of the cases in Chinle schools involve alcoholic parents, child abuse, or neglect. Other schools might create a similar parenting specialist position to deal with these parents.

- I have noticed that there is a lot of negativism and blaming the teacher, the parents, or the administrators, but I feel that we can change if we all work together and have direction from up above. On the Navajo reservation, I know parents and leaders are telling the reservation schools that they have to integrate the Native language and culture into the curriculum, but this also requires direction from the administrators. The administrators need to tell teachers that this must be part of their curriculum because it gives students a better idea of who they are so they won't feel ostracized and negative about themselves. A lot of student problems are related to self-esteem. At our school at Fort Defiance (AZ) we have a district parent committee that includes parents from elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as teachers and administrators. Gradually, we are working together to build up our parental involvement. We have a community liaison person who goes with teachers or administrators to meetings. We try to make them feel welcome. Even though I am a teacher and working with the school district, I, as a parent, still feel very, very low. We're trying to change that image there so we will be more humanistic.

Parent Initiated Efforts

- I got involved on the Flathead Reservation because my son was getting negative feedback about our last name from other Natives as well as from the non-Indians. I found out that there were some other parents in the same situation, and so we went in and talked to the school. Prior to this time, there was a standstill in the Native American studies. So the parents in our community got together, got the ball rolling again, and now we have implemented a Native American studies program on a trial basis from the sophomore to the senior level in high school. There are two different tribes represented in the school, the Salish and Kootenai, so we worked with Elders from both tribes. The Native American studies program is successful because of the help from the Elders. Every classroom setting was developed from the Elders' points of view, suggestions, and advice. We are in the process of getting a bilingual grant for grades K through 12, and we don't do anything without the Elders' words and through the settings of the sweatlodge.

- Last winter we were told that our JOM parent committee was going to be removed from the school because it was administratively burdensome to the school system. In response, our parents incorporated the committee, and so our parents now run their own JOM parent committee. About 30 percent of our parents are single parents, and a small number of our students are raised by grandparents. We don't have a lot of parent participation with the JOM program, but we do have a lot of support from parents as far as letting us know what they and their kids need. One program that we provided through the JOM was a parenting skills class that had a very positive response. That class not only motivated many of our committee members, but it also motivated many of our parents to be continually involved in sports and academic activities. We have a low dropout rate in our school, and although most of our students are mainstreamed into the white culture because it is a suburban school, they seem to excel in many ways including both academics and sports. Some have even gone out to reach into the cultural aspects of the Native American community.

- Heart Butte (MT) used to serve just K through 8, but now they have a high school due to parental involvement because parents wanted to stop their kids from going to an off-reservation school where there was a lot of racism.

Regional Efforts

- We need to build better links between tribes and school systems, particularly where public school districts are involved and tribes have not been given their rightful role to provide meaningful input in the school system. One of the methods used by the New Mexico Center for Excellence in Indian Education is to utilize traditional systems that are already in place.

The Center has tried to form a planning committee that is representative of the systems that tribes have already begun to establish to encouraged parental involvement such as participation in expenditure of 874--Impact Aid--funds and Title V (Indian Education Act) committees. However, we still need to encourage these committees to reach out to the grassroots level and involve even more parents.

V. Other Issues and Concerns

Racism

- I come from a tribe that has two public schools within a seven-mile radius on each side. Why do we need a tribal school when we are so close to public schools? It is because we suffer a lot of racism in the State of Washington.

- Our kids going into ninth grade at the high school are facing institutionalized racism and cultural insensitivity. This is especially true in areas where there is competition between the non-Indian and the Indian communities for a treaty resource, such as in the Pacific Northwest where the tribes are fishing tribes. Some of the teachers are commercial fishermen themselves, and thus there is a lot of antagonism because they are competing during the summer months for money.

- Students face blatant racism in their classes. In one district in Northwest Washington, high school students were required to take a class in Pacific Northwest history. Because teachers could use supplementary materials that did not have to be reviewed by a curriculum board, some teachers were using materials that were extremely racist and sexist. One unit called "Mountain Men and Their Women" talked about Indian fathers selling their daughters in rendezvous with the mountain men in return for a new rifle or a horse. The young girls supposedly agreed to this because of their low status as women. The students in this class were required to give corresponding answers on tests despite the inaccuracies and bias of the lessons. Similarly, one teacher showed a movie and clapped every time an Indian got killed.

  This school imposed an attendance policy that was extremely punitive. If a student missed ten days of school within a semester, he or she had to petition for academic credit for that semester, regardless of academic standing. The school does not consider whether you might be sick, attending ceremonials, or helping your family fish.

Native Culture and Language

- It would be very nice to think that the teaching of culture could occur at home, but that's not always the case. A lot of our traditional language and culture is being lost right now and it can't be taught in the home. That is why we reinforce it at school.

- We need instruction in our Native languages and in the traditional culture. We need to put this together with the white ways so our kids will understand both traditional and white ways.

- We need to bridge the gap between institutions and the communities' need to inform and perpetuate themselves. We keep discussing the need to integrate language and culture into schools. This appears to be a viable suggestion in order to make the school systems part of Indian communities or part of any community that they are operating in. Schools would be relevant to the population that they are supposed to be educating and this would make the institution part of the community with which they are working.

- Native American Indian languages and history are not taught at the high school, and in fact, they are shunned. The only time that Native Americans are recognized is on Columbus Day or one day out of the school year when they have Native American Indian Day. Sometimes schools forget to send memos out and kids don't know what day that was.

- The BIA is supposed to allow BIA schools to teach Navajo language and culture, but they don't. The BIA needs to be pressured to allow more money for Native American studies, or they must at least tell the schools that they can teach this. We're having problems at one of the schools where there is no time during the school day for teaching Navajo language and culture, and so this is usually done at the dormitory maybe once a week.

- I am concerned about losing our culture and traditions. I feel that I am one of the last generations on our reservation to be fully fluent in our language and also to practice our culture and our traditions. I teach language and culture at the University of Minnesota at Duluth and I have taught Indian philosophy at other colleges, but I don't seem to get that much involvement from our people. We offer continuing education extension classes on the reservation in language, culture, and history, but few people are involved. It is easy for parents to learn how to play bingo and this is where time is spent on the reservation. I would like to see our children learn something other than this; I would like to see them learn the language. Our reservation has two sectors to it. One sector has between 50 and 75 people living there, and I have an enrollment of 17 people including Elders and youngsters. The other part of the reservation houses 300 people, but only 12 are enrolled in the class. I cannot get these people involved because there are not many full-blooded people left--they are all intermixed. But one hates to see the tradition, culture, and language go down the drain.

Native American Teachers and Staff

- I am a parent of six children and have dealt with the public school system for 24 years. I have taught my children to respect all people, like I was taught by my grandmother. But I have learned that the school system does not understand American Indian children or their culture. I believe the school system needs to have respect for American Indian children. When I sent my children to school they were feeling good about themselves, their culture, and their heritage, but they came home feeling inferior about themselves and full of questions about our value system. I believe we need to hire American Indian teachers because they understand American Indian culture, and preferably we should hire local Indian teachers from each area.

- It's crucial that we hire Native American teachers. At Fort Defiance our Native American enrollment is about 90 percent, and our teaching staff is about 75 percent Native American. We try hard to incorporate the language by talking Navajo or the Native language to the people. A lot of times the teachers and the administrators go into the community to participate in powwows or gatherings to show the people that even though they may put themselves above others sometimes, they are still people. I myself go to squaw dances and yeibechei dances, and I see parents and students there. We try to communicate and bridge the gap through cultural activities.

- I'd like NIEA and this Task Force to stress the need for public school Native American Indians to serve on school boards. I'm really concerned about Northern Arizona because we don't have any Native American Indians on any of the school boards.

Funding

- We need more teachers, teacher's aides, and liaisons to help increase the educational opportunities for our children, but we are dependent on the funding of the federal government.

- School districts that receive Impact Aid should have a board of Indian education commissioners comprised of parents, school district employees, and tribal representatives to address problems or improvements that need to be made. This board should have clout with the federal government to make recommendations for sanctions against school districts so that districts can't get Impact Aid unless they respond to the needs of our students.

- When administrations make funding cuts, the paperwork tends to build up. Sometimes it costs schools more to file for $10 than to file for $100, which jeopardizes smaller school districts. As larger school districts, we need to protect these smaller districts, because if you get rid of the smaller districts, you'll be coming after us. I guess we need to form a line of defense.

Health, Wellness, and Substance Abuse Prevention

- Our tribal council passed a resolution stating that our tribe would be alcohol and drug free within the next year or two. Consequently, there has been a lot of study on the addictive and dysfunctional communities and families. We discovered that even if you don't drink now, you may have inherited dysfunctional behaviors, and this is one of the reasons that we as adults can't help our children. I think that federal agencies have to better coordinate the programs and the resources that we have to educate our tribal leaders and parent committees because then this information will filter down to the communities.

- I feel that positive reinforcement of accomplishments is very important. When working with a child who accomplishes something, give him or her a hug and you will see positive results. When Native American people get discouraged, it tends to push them away from thinking that they can accomplish something, even if the task is simple. It seems like a lot of expectations are put upon the youth. If they are not receiving positive reinforcement, and if you get disappointed and lose patience because they don't do something right, they may become discouraged about doing their work or performing to their highest capabilities.

- Our students from the Navajo reservation have to be bused to the high schools. Certain things develop from these bus rides causing problems with absenteeism, alcoholism, and peer pressure. We've talked about these problems with the public school, but we're not heard. I think there needs to be a bigger organization, such as NIEA, to put pressure on public schools.

Trust Responsibilities

- We hear the BIA and parts of ED say one thing and do another. We feel that we have lost trust. We have to keep our eyes on them all of the time and this is wrong. They are supposed to be in charge of a trust responsibility that the United States government had signed a long time ago, and we'd like to see that honored.

Issues Concerning INAR Task Force

- A concern about the membership of the Task Force was expressed and INAR Co-Chair Terrell Bell, speaking only of his appointment to the Task Force, explained that Secretary of Education, Lauro Cavazos, asked him to serve on it. Dr. Bell had felt that the Task Force should be comprised only of Native Americans, but Cavazos insisted he could help because of his previous experience as U.S. Secretary of Education under President Reagan and because of his role in the release of the "Nation at Risk" report. Each member of the Task Force was appointed by Secretary Cavazos.

- I noticed that no one on the Task Force is from the Northwest. Other than the hearings, how will you relate to problems in the Northwest? Our problems are unique. We don't believe that anybody from the Midwest, Southwest, or the East know our ways of the Northwest. We, the people of the Northwest, cannot and would not represent anybody from the Midwest, Southwest, or the East, because we do not know their ways.

  Dr. Bell explained that he grew up in Idaho, served as superintendent of schools in Wyoming, and is currently living in Salt Lake. William Demmert, from Alaska, is from as far north and west as possible. However, if you define the Northwest as strictly Washington and Oregon, there are no representatives.

- Notice of Task Force hearings and the call for information and papers came out during the summertime when we had no secretarial help and very poor communication with our people whose input we needed in order to answer your questions. We had to conduct a telephone survey to gather our data. Furthermore, it came due the week of the testimony in Seattle, so we had no time to prepare for anyone to testify in Seattle.

INAR/NACIE Joint Issues Sessions
NIEA 22nd Annual Conference - San Diego, California
October 15, 1990

"Partnerships of Schools, Tribes, Communities, Parents, and Businesses"

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October 15, 1990

Summary: "Partnerships of Schools, Tribes, Communities, Parents, and Businesses"

The first session on Partnerships of Schools, Tribes, Communities, Parents, and Businesses was hosted by INAR Task Force co-chair William Demmert and NACIE member Buck Martin. The second session on these issues was hosted by INAR Task Force member Bob Martin.

I. Partnerships That Work

Partnerships Involving Businesses

- The Phoenix Unified School District developed a program with corporations to provide 7th grade students the opportunity to explore careers they have an interest in. For example, one student who wanted to be a pilot worked with Sky Harbor International Airport and was given opportunities to work at the control tower and to fly in a helicopter. The project has ties with many other businesses that provide many hours of in-kind contributions. This way, the school is able to maximize its dollars while providing a unique opportunity for its students.

- In one rural district, high school juniors and seniors work for the local businesses, with half of their salaries being paid by the businesses, and the other half by the school district. The students are trained as secretaries, bank clerks, waitresses, accountants, and lab technicians.

- "Workshop and Business Opportunities" creates partnerships between aspiring entrepreneurs and successful business people. This 16-week training is based on the philosophy that problem solving, thinking creatively, finding solutions, and developing flexible, responsive business plans are the bases of good business practice and are also useful lifetime skills. They conduct interactive sessions between participants and successful people from the Indian business community in which they do not simply give answers, but instead look at case studies and examine their own thinking on how to solve problems. This program originally came out of New York City and was developed for black people in Harlem in the 60s. It was taken to Oglala Sioux in the late 70s and we've taken it to the Southwest and found it successful not only in urban settings, but also in very remote communities.

- A partnership in Wisconsin with Milwaukee city business people and IBM nonetheless brought an IBM computer program "Writing to Read" in some of the Milwaukee inner-city schools and in rural schools in Wisconsin where there are high unemployment rates and strong financial needs. In several of the poorest counties where the schools did not even apply for the free equipment, IBM nonetheless brought the equipment directly to the tribes and provided training.

Partnerships Involving the Community

- The St. Regis Reservation has established several partnerships. One is with the school district right across from the reservation; one is with colleges and universities in the community and around New York; and another is between the tribe and parents. As a result of these partnerships, most of the community members that have been participating in the project on parent advisory committees or as technical advisors of the tribe have gone forward to work on and/or complete advanced degrees. The dropout rate of this group is down to 6 percent. The number of students who have gone on to higher education as a result of these partnerships has also increased significantly while their dropout rates decreased significantly. Furthermore, Native language and cultural activities have been integrated in the schools, and the Indian population in schools has increased because students are staying longer.

- The New Mexico Indian Education Center for Excellence is a community-oriented, research-based educational institution that will combine the talents, resources, and efforts of the 22 school districts serving the Indian population in New Mexico. The mechanism used to form this coalition was a joint powers agreement that protected the sovereign rights of tribes while allowing the participating systems to work together. The purpose of this partnership is to develop new strategies for dealing with Indian education issues by conducting community-based research. Because this is community based, the communities themselves identify the research problems and assist with the design and implementation of the research model. Additionally, the center serves to identify exemplary programs that are successful in certain school systems if there is interest in replicating those programs.

- The Rosebud Reservation has a number of partnerships in various stages of development. In conjunction with Sinte Gleska College, all of the local school districts, and the contract school at St. Francis, (1) they have developed a unified curriculum for the reservation from preschool through the adult level, (2) they are currently working on the certification of Lakota language teachers and integrating tribal curriculum into the local school systems, (3) they are developing a tribal education code that will give the tribe control of both the school at St. Francis and the state public school, and (4) they are working in a partnership with the State of South Dakota to develop accreditation and certification requirements for teachers within the reservation boundaries.

- Minneapolis Public Schools has a summer school program called Knee Bend in which parents come to school with their children. Both transportation and day care for younger siblings are provided by the school. Parent participation is very high in this summer program.

- The Inter-tribal Friendship House in Oakland is attempting to form an association with the Oakland School District to support the schools when their Title V monies run low and supplement some of their money by in-kind contributions or some other process that would help the Indian students in grades K-12. This association would also include the parents and community. We have recently resumed a tutorial program for a more fully integrated education program all the way through adult education. To establish financial stability, we are seeking corporate support from small companies and minority businesses. Currently we have two businesses within our own organization--a gift shop and a screen print--that help stabilize our funding, but we feel that increasing our business ventures would be beneficial.

Partnerships Involving Postsecondary Institutions

- The Zuni Public School District in New Mexico has been involved in a partnership with Stanford University for the past five years in a project called the Zuni-Stanford Project. Through this partnership, Stanford University provides technical assistance and support in looking at issues identified as important in the Zuni community. As a result, tribal managers and district and board personnel have received administrative training from Stanford University. Stanford has also provided assistance in setting up a database for census accountability for the tribe. Additionally, they have developed joint projects involving Stanford undergraduates and Zuni high school students in teaching and learning Southwest cultures with a focus on Zuni cultures.

  The Zuni Life School Program has been developed in conjunction with Stanford's health promotion/disease prevention project. Three years ago, prior to the implementation of this project, the Zuni community had one of the highest suicide rates in the United States among Native Americans, averaging four per year. Since partial implementation of the project has occurred, and they have developed a Zuni-specific culturally-based curriculum and approach, there have been no school-age youth suicides.

- Northern Arizona University has partnerships with the Northern Arizona School Board Association, the Navajo and Hopi tribes, and the U.S. Department of Education to teach students to use computers and also how to incorporate them into their everyday lives. They also work with teachers on the Navajo and Hopi reservations and provide them with workshops and seminars on how to become aware of the needs of Native American students. This partnership works with the dropout prevention project and provides parenting sessions for parents in the area. Northern Arizona University also has a summer program called Nizhoni Camp that helps Native Americans make the transition from rural reservation life into higher education.

- Grossmont College in the San Diego area has created a special relationship with the Indian community and the college-held fundraisers to establish an Indian scholarship fund. Any student who attends Grossmont has his or her books and tuition paid by the urban Indian community. They also provide a mentor for their Indian students to retain them in school.

Partnerships Involving the State

- A school in North Dakota and the state department of education operate under a cooperative education venture; the school would not be able to operate without the state foundation aid payments. In turn, the school implements the effective schools program of both the Bureau and the state school improvement process and thus works toward the total betterment of education.

II. Suggestions for Future Partnerships

- Schools--especially rural and reservation schools--should develop partnerships with universities to begin building and training a teacher corps for those schools. Because this teacher corps will be built in cooperation with tribes, graduating teachers will be able to move directly into their school systems.

- BIA and IHS need to be in a partnership at school sites because children need health services wherever they are spending their time.

- Indian educators should study the Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS) used to track students because Indian children are also a very mobile group. We need a tracking system within the BIA to follow our highly mobile children. A partnership between the migrant education program and Indian education may be a viable solution.

- BIA schools should have a special relationship with state departments of education. This would allow BIA schools to be on the textbook cycle and receive the reduced rate for purchasing textbooks and curriculum through the state department of education. Sherman Indian High School in California does not receive Impact Aid from the BIA and thus is not on the textbook cycle. However, the BIA does send Impact Aid to the public schools to ensure that those children receive state curriculum and texts.

- Partnerships between tribes and schools would be beneficial if funding could be channeled through the tribe to enable it to supplement a public school system to improve its academic programs. This would especially benefit large, urban areas where students are dropping out of school and tending to enroll in alternative programs.

III. Establishing Partnerships

Problems

- Because there is not much industry on reservations, there is limited opportunity for school partnerships with small businesses or even tribal businesses. Furthermore, some reservations have an 80 percent unemployment rate so if there are any opportunities for employment, the students in school would be at the bottom of the list. For example, a position for a custodian draws in 60 applicants and a teaching position draws in 100 applicants. Because some communities are so isolated, employment opportunities generally geared toward young people, such as jobs in fast-food chains, are not available to rural youth. These kids have to look for other opportunities that are usually short-term, such as agricultural work or fire fighting. However, these jobs often have restrictions and many of our youth cannot participate.

- Partnerships between school, parents, and tribes are hindered by the structure and implementation of Impact Aid (Part 223 particularly) and Title V. Under Impact Aid, there are required policies and procedures that must be developed between the tribes and the school systems. However, in order for tribes to make sure that these policies and procedures are carried out, the only recourse they have is to file a complaint to stop the funding, which is a long, cumbersome procedure. If the Department of Education truly wanted to encourage a partnership between the public schools and Indian tribes, it would have a healthy monitoring system to make sure these regulations are implemented. This way, Indian people would be able to determine the quality, quantity, and standards of educational policies that affect their children.

Recommendations

- There are necessary ingredients to promote self-help within tribes: (1) It is necessary to look at the common denominator in partnerships--people. The development of people has to be the first priority, and within that, the resource is the spirit of volunteerism. People are not motivated by people, but rather by their concern for the well-being of children. We must therefore focus on the well-being of children. (2) Within a self-help process there must be the celebration of values that are already within our communities. (3) A process of self-help is supported by minimum involvement on the part of any outside agency. Minimum involvement empowers people to voice their own ideas, and solutions come from within.

- We need a federal policy that supports direct tribal regulatory authority over state public schools on reservations and in Indian country. Indian control is the key to effective Indian education for Indian people, but recent efforts in the federal arena have centered on trying to develop that control through funding mechanisms, parent committees, and administrative processes. The sovereignty of Indian tribes gives them authority over their members and their territory, and that sovereignty should include--at least concurrently with the state--authority to directly regulate state public schools that serve Indian children on reservations and in Indian country. This authority needs to be recognized by federal law because tribes will need to devise and adopt education laws that regulate the schools, as well as policies and programs provided for under those laws.

- Cooperation between school districts and tribes needs to be a two-way street so that once partnerships are in place, it's up to both the public school districts on reservations and the tribal governments to fulfill their parts of the agreements. In Montana, there is a law to provide for this process; however, politics and the tribal court system often get in the way of tribes fulfilling partnerships, especially in election years. It is important that in developing partnerships, both the tribal governments and the public school systems examine their needs, the types of services they are able to provide, and the laws of both the state and the tribe. Thus, tribes must develop education codes and policies to provide a direction for the public school systems.

- We need to develop plans and procedures to implement programs so the state and other entities can work together. Indian people are not organizers, except those who are educated. Some of our people do not have the kind of background knowledge of how to organize and how to implement this type of thing. Teaching our people has to be part of the process.

IV. Parental Involvement

- In order for Western education to be a part of the value system of Indian communities, Indians have to see the worth of education. After several hundred years of having education imposed upon them, it's never really been a part of the value system. It's been a long, hard struggle, but I think that a lot of parents are beginning to realize that there is value in education. However, there are still people who were punished for speaking their Native language and who experienced Christianity coming in and saying that their culture was the devil's work. It has to take a whole re-education of Indian people to make them committed to this kind of education.

- If Indian parents are going to take part in the education system, they have to realize that they do have a role in influencing the school curriculum. They have the right to say what they want their children to be taught, and they have the ability to do so through politics, electing the school board, and electing committees. I feel that these programs that require parent participation have changed a whole generation of people who are now sophisticated and making those changes for their children.

- We need to encourage non-Indian teachers to work with Indian parents so the children can see that the Indian parents and the non-Indian teachers have the same ideas about education. This is important so children will have confidence in their teachers and teachers can recognize that these children are just as important as other children in the school.

- There is a lack of involvement by Indian parents in both Title V and JOM. Title V and JOM parent committees were placed into the regulations to ensure local control, but there is still little involvement by Indian parents in the programs that affect their children. This lack of involvement exists because school administrators still hand-select parent committee members. They still write programs for the committee and expect them to sign off without any input. Also, schools get anxious when parents say they want to be involved. These things are caused by a lack of enforcement and monitoring by the BIA and Office of Indian Education and the inconsistent operating procedures for JOM from area office to area office. We need to improve monitoring by the BIA education office to see that schools properly administer the funds involving the parent committee as prescribed by the regulations.

- When schools are involved with parents, it is important that parents have a sense of ownership and belonging. Recognizing parents for their contributions is one way of continuing a partnership. By recognizing parents and creating a parent task force, one school was able to empower parents and show them that they could affect school policy. Parents in this school were more interested in being on the task force than on the school board because they felt ownership and pride in the task force.

- On our reservation we get Johnson O'Malley, Title V, Title IV, and Impact Aid, and we have parent committees for each one of these programs. I find myself going to committee meetings all of the time and I'm wondering why they aren't decisionmaking bodies instead of advisory bodies. You get burnt out after a while, and so does the superintendent. If you've got a new superintendent who is trying to open the lines of communication, he or she is going to four meetings a month. And you're sending committee members from your board to those meetings also, and pretty soon you are losing people who are vital to your board.

V. Other Issues and Concerns

Native Culture and Languages

- Indian people are post-trauma stress disordered (PTSD) because we sit on reservations and watch our culture and language being taken away, and we question how we fit into the mainstream society that we are being pushed into.

- There has been a tremendous resistance to accepting Native languages and cultures in schools. However, research indicates that learning a language well--even a Native language--can be used as a base from which to learn other languages. Learning Native languages is also important for the retention and strength of original languages that are unique to the Americas. Recently, the Senate has passed legislation concerning Native languages and cultures.

- We need culturally-relevant curriculum that includes language and history in all subject areas and grade levels.

Academic Performance

- Students have a hard time making the transition from high school to college because they are not adequately prepared. Indian students in public schools have a problem because they are often taught less than other students but get passed on to the next grade without having an equal level of education. By the time they reach college, these students are behind grade level and first need to take developmental classes before they can succeed with college level courses.

- Native American students suffer from low academic achievement, high dropout rates, and a feeling of alienation within the school system.

- In one area, students are traveling 60 miles to attend public schools when there is a boarding school nearby. Nothing could be done about this situation because public school policy overrides the desires of the tribes and parents have a choice of where to send their children. However, it is actually not the parents making choices, but the students. Consequently, the mobility rate is high and these students are not achieving because they spend a lot of time transferring from one school to another. The students enter one public school and are not able to identify with the curriculum so they go to another school. This goes on throughout the year.

Categorical Programs

- Focus needs to be put on greater enforcement of federal regulations within the school systems to fully implement educational opportunities for Indian students. Many school districts are not abiding by regulations.

- School districts should be held responsible for all monies that come into the system, not just Title V and JOM funds. Money such as desegregation dollars should be used for teacher training programs to attract Indian teachers as role models into the school system.

- The lack of understanding and insensitivity of public school staff is a cause for low academic achievement of Native Americans. Money from Chapter 1 should be tied to regulations requiring the education of teachers on Indian education, culture, and curriculum.

Educational Facilities

- Many Native American students attend public schools because those schools are able to secure more construction monies and thus offer new and attractive facilities. Consequently, BIA grant and contract schools are losing enrollment. Some of the buildings on reservations are deteriorating year by year. Students are still housed in buildings that were built in 1940 and are dilapidated. We need new money for construction and renovation. We also need adequate maintenance funds to keep those facilities in good working condition.

School Accreditation and Teacher Certification

- We need an Indian accreditation system. Currently there are three accreditation systems the Pine Ridge Schools have to go through: the state, the North Central Accreditation, and the BIA. Each reservation should have its own separate accreditation system because we all have different cultures and different beliefs. It would be an asset for each tribe to develop its own system.

- Because our children compete with the major society, we may want our children's teachers credentialed through the State Department of Education.

- Teachers of Indian children should be certified with a specialization, as are special education teachers and ESL teachers. A specialization in addition to a regular credential would give us the foundation that we want our teachers to have.

Academic Program

- School days should be extended to match the work day of the parents so children are kept in a structured situation. Indian education could be taught through an extended day program. Currently, students are being pulled out of classes to attend Title V programs and continually miss lessons in the basic areas. We could reinforce our culture and our language through an extended day program and leave our children in the regular classrooms during the academic day.

- Public schools can do many things for students whether or not there is a job guaranteed for them when they graduate. We need to train students to be waitresses, office workers, and janitors because these are the kinds of jobs we have available. We need to teach pride in doing a good job, regardless of the job, and teach good work habits.

Funding

- There is a lack of adequate funding. The lowest per pupil expenditure in the State of South Dakota is $6,000, and yet the BIA and contract schools have $3,000 less than that. We are always operating on a shoestring budget. We need more funding to give those kids an opportunity to get the best quality education. Every year we struggle with a budget crunch and have to cut corners in transportation and food services.

- We will lose our teachers if the Gramm-Rudman cuts go into effect. Teachers are not willing to take a furlough of two or three weeks during the year. We need a stable system set up.

- The Navajo tribe has used some of its own tribal funds to develop tribal codes but does not have enough money to fund educational programs to enforce some of the established standards and policies. Tribes across the nation need a lot of financial and technical support from the national level.

Institutional Change

- Native Americans are so quick to blame others for the problems of Indian education, but we have no one else to blame but ourselves as Indian leaders and Indian parents. Blaming others doesn't solve our problems; we have the same problems today as we did years ago. We must go down to the grassroots level, to the people who are working day to day with our children--parents, teachers, principals, and school boards--as a first stepping stone. We must evaluate ourselves, the Indian people, first.

- Over the last couple of years, the Voigt Decision in Wisconsin has caused a great deal of conflict. Indian treaty rights have been the basis for bomb threats in schools, racist placards, and general controversy. Our concern is for the students in the classroom and for the possibility of enhancing the learning opportunity for all the students in the public schools; therefore, many Indian communities who have not previously looked at the possibility of going contract with their education systems are beginning to do so, because they feel a need to protect their children from these kinds of problems.

  Through the assistance of a representative who has literally put his career on the line, Wisconsin has passed a bill requiring the teaching of Indian history, culture, and tribal sovereignty in all schools in the state as a vehicle for informing the public and, hopefully, offsetting some of these problems. Many of the problems that we now face in the State of Wisconsin have come about as a direct result of people not knowing anything about Indian history, tribal governments, and legal authority. When they hear about treaty rights, they assume that the Indians had gone away for the last 100 years and suddenly came back with a treaty in their hands. Because of that attitude, they feel a great deal of frustration. Their frustration is magnified by their perception that Indians have been just like everybody else for the last 100 years.

There is a need for an educated populace in the United States that is aware of the rights and authorities that tribes do have so that children grow up in an environment that understands Indians, rather than having to educate society after a crisis has already arisen.

INAR/NACIE Joint Issues Sessions
NIEA 22nd Annual Conference - San Diego, California
October 16, 1990

"Special Session for Elders"

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Summary: "Special Session for Elders"

The Special Session for Elders was co-hosted by INAR Task Force member Hayes Lewis and NACIE Council member Buck Martin. The following issues, programs, and recommendations were discussed:

I. Defining the Needs & Issues

- The needs of elderly citizens among Indian tribes vary from location to location and the way tribal governments relate to these citizens varies, but there are some common concerns. In some places, there are strong elderly citizens programs including health and other kinds of support services; in other areas they are just beginning to look at those kinds of issues and needs.

  There are many different ways we can interact with our Elders, whether it is to support them in the home, provide opportunities for them to get together, or use them as resource people in our schools and other educational programs.

- I had hoped that there would be Elders here talking about issues back in our communities yet I look around and don't see very many people sitting here and I feel very saddened by that. I would like to share my own personal experience with Elders back home.

  I come from an area of Minnesota where much of our language and culture is lost. I live about 130 miles from my reservation in an urban area in Northern Minnesota. I am the last generation in our family who can speak our language. I cannot speak it fluently, but nevertheless, out of a family of 13 children, I am the only one who speaks the language with my mother. She is now 80 years old and enjoys my visits when I come home because both my husband and I can speak the language with her.

  When we are away, she doesn't have people to talk to. Back home not very many people my age speak the language with their parents. My mother doesn't get out anymore and it is really sad because she feels very alienated. She hasn't been going to pow wows and she used to be an avid pow wow goer. She was a jingle dress dancer and she used to go often to pow wows, but she doesn't do those kinds of things anymore.

  One thing she is involved in is an adult day care program that she goes to two days a week in the town of Deer River. She really enjoys that very much. When I am back home, I go to the rest home where they have the adult day care program and I look around and see all of our Elders sitting with other people with nothing to do. It has saddened my heart because many of these Elders really want to be able to have that link with the culture, and there is nothing for them other than the services provided by the day care program.

I think in many cases, elderly citizens feel really isolated from their families, relatives, and even friends. So whatever we could do to strengthen and support them, I think we need to do it.

I am from the Fond Du Lac Reservation in Cloquet, Minnesota. When I listen to this story, it really brings back to me memories of my mother's pain. She was in an orphanage and didn't get treated very nicely and then she went to a Catholic school in Wisconsin. The pain that I am feeling is tied to a lot of insecurities for my mother and a lot of emotion of not feeling loved in these boarding schools.

Even though it happened many years ago, it is apparent to me that there are a lot of our people in the United States who need to be loved--Elders and younger people--because of the schooling that they have had and the stereotyping that goes along with being an Indian.

My father died 13 years ago and they were very close, very bonded, very happily married, and very good parents. Now that he is gone, she can't drive and so she goes once a day to the elderly kitchen to have lunch. There is a big gap because we all work and we can't always be there for her.

I attended a conference last year in Missoula, Montana, sponsored by the National Association of Native American Adult Children of Alcoholics. The conference planners only expected about 150 Indian people to show up, but by the close of the conference almost 700 had come from across the nation to talk about their pain, their abandonment issues, and their grieving, not only from alcoholism, but from multi-generational cultural oppression and cultural genocide.

While I was there I heard the term "sleeping Elders," and that immediately caught my attention. I came to understand that they were talking about so many of our Elders who have carried the pain of not only multi-generational alcoholism in their families, but they have also carried the helplessness and the hopelessness of the forced assimilation, the boarding schools, and the oppression that has happened to all our people across this country and their inability to do anything about it. So many of our Elders have carried this pain to their graves, our chiefs and our ancestors took it to their graves, and they passed it on to their offspring, until we are here today.

When I go home to see my mother, she is very quiet and I can just feel the pain around her as I come into the kitchen. She is not able to say anything, but I can see it on her face--the unresolved grief of growing up with abandonment issues and the other things.

I am from the Bois Forte Reservation, but I am living in Duluth. I teach at the University of Minnesota in Duluth. I too am sad to see so many empty chairs. I can look back at the Elders on my reservation and there are a lot of things that are positive about the different programs we offer.

The thing that bothers me most is that we don't utilize our Elders as much as we should. We need to understand them as our original teachers. They didn't have to go to school to know the things that they know, and we sometimes overlook the values that they gave us as little children. On our reservation we need to find programs where they feel they can be useful, helpful people in our communities. Unfortunately there are no monies available where we can involve them as teachers. History on the reservation is nil--nobody knows the history except a few of the Elders.

I went to the University of Minnesota when I was 40 years old, and I am considered an Elder by a number of people, including myself. But back then, in 1982, we had a feast for our Elders and sang songs for them. All of a sudden, one or two of them started talking about the history of our tribe. I keep thinking about that today; I should have brought my tape recorder to the feast that day, because I heard so much history in just that little while, listening to them.

My mother passed away a year ago from the effects of alcoholism, but she used to teach the culture class. There was money appropriated then, but since that time I haven't seen any of our Elder teachers. There aren't that many left now, probably only three of them. What happens when they are gone?

On my reservation, my brother and I are probably the only ones who speak the language fluently and we are the only ones who know the culture and the ceremonies. We are the only ones who know the ways of survival in the woods. We are probably the last generation of traditional Elders. What happens when we go?

We are a lost people all of a sudden. How do we get this back? How do we get our children--the "little sleeping giants"--to wake up? How do we utilize the remaining Elders? Money is the bottom line, I guess--How do we appropriate the money?

- A lot of Elders don't know all the qualities that they have to offer other people, because for so many years they were told that they didn't have any and that they were stupid--and they were treated as such. So when we talk about them giving back, we need to realize that they often don't even know what they can do or if it is important. And in order for them to be able to talk and share their knowledge, we have to help them get rid of the pain they carry. We have to tell them, "Hey, I love you. I think you are important, and I think you have a lot to offer."

Difficulties with Access

- I am from the Lummi Reservation in Bellingham, Washington, and I teach cultural curriculum and cultural arts there. I find that we have trouble getting the Elders to come into our school buildings because there is no access. We do have a senior center and we do take some of our kids over there for lunches and to sing them songs. But we need to realize that access is a serious problem in our schools. If they had to go to the bathroom, or if there were an emergency and we had to get them out real fast, access is an important issue.

- That is a really important concern. In recent years there has been a lot of legislation designed to improve accessibility of public buildings. In Zuni we are building an elementary school, and you would be surprised how much extra it costs to put in all of the necessary accessibility features. But it is for good reason which includes access for handicapped citizens, and those who are a little bit older and having a hard time.

Medication vs Holistic Health Approach

- I am a tribal member from Fort Belknap in Montana. It is important to consider that Elders are often filled with medication for arthritis and other ailments. So when we explore the whole issue of Elders, it is important that we look at the concept of wellness through nutrition and exercise as well as medication. It is almost as if IHS fosters their dependence on medication. So I think we need to take a holistic approach that is comprehensive and focuses on health as well as illness.

- This is an important point because so many of our Elders end up in a drugged state. My mother is a diabetic and has to have certain kinds of pills. We ended up cutting the dosage in half and our mother just kind of "woke up." I think that pharmacy and IHS people generally don't realize that elderly citizens cannot metabolize chemicals the way younger people can.

II. Recommendations

- I would like to propose that we establish our own adult day care programs back in our communities. If we don't want to go as far as proposing a nursing home, then we should look at the kinds of services an adult day care center can offer our people. We could operate it from a cultural perspective. It would be so nice if the young people could come in there and start learning their language again from the old people who have these things to share. I believe that we would fill a gap this way and help stop the cultural genocide that has taken place. People of my generation need to have more of a link with the older people.

- I think something should be set up, wherever it comes from, so that more Elders can be picked up on a more frequent basis. I realize that there is a money crunch, but out of respect for our Elders and all the love they have given us, we have to give back a little more as they get older. They should feel that they are very loved. We should give them means of communication, whether it is a bus that can pick them up, or some kind of counseling support to help them release their pain. It is hard for them to talk to us as children even though we try pretty hard to help them.

  I know that money is always going to be the question. But so much is spent on so many idiotic things in our country, if we can't spend money on our Elders, then it is a darn shame.

- We really need to take responsibility to help our Elders deal with all of their grieving. Back home, in urban areas and on the reservation, I see many, many, many of our people walking the street intoxicated. My heart really saddens for them because I know that they have not healed yet in their heart about the issues that we have grown up with. We need to provide some kinds of therapy programs and activities to help our Elders talk about and address these issues.

- A lot of times it is hard to do something about a problem when you look at the larger issues and maybe depend on somebody else. When we talk about the tribe or some agency doing something about a problem, to some degree we are taking responsibility for personal action away from ourselves.

I think, more and more, that we need to teach our children that if something is going to happen for our elderly citizens, then it first must start with direct action and concern on a personal level.

In my own situation, my mother is a diabetic and has to get dialyzed three times a week. There are a number of citizens in Zuni who have to do this and they have a hard time. Many times it is our own Indian people who are working with our elderly citizens who fail to be alert to situations and respond to them.

For instance, they were expecting these people, right after they get off the dialysis machine, to walk what amounts to about half a block to the pharmacy to get their medication, when the staff could far more easily have gotten the medicine for them and taken it over to them. We observed this situation; I went into the service unit director and said, "Look, here is a problem. Why don't you come look at it and see what our Zuni staff at the IHS hospital can do to help these people out?" They are in a weakened condition. One old lady had a walker. That kind of attitude and treatment of elderly people is criminal. I was told it would take too much for someone to come in to take care of it. We argued that they should make the young people get out from behind the pharmacy counter and come over to give these people their medicine. It is the least they can do considering how much these Elders have given us.

So it often begins with little things. As Indian people we always say that we respect and value our elderly citizens, but generally when you look out there with the tribal groups, we don't practice what we preach.

I believe that in Indian communities or wherever we have our elderly citizens, we have to really make a commitment to look after their concerns and needs. We have to make this a priority, just as sometimes tribes have to make education of younger children a priority.

I would like to recommend that we intensify efforts to bring youth and Elders together. Many Elders feel that they won't provide the information or pass on the knowledge unless those young people show an interest.

I know myself, I wasn't interested in my culture back in my early 20s. I was into materialism and those kinds of things. My mother didn't openly share her wealth of information. But since I have gotten older and more mature, I have found my identity. I have been asking her many, many questions, I have shown an interest, and I have discovered--after sharing this with my husband--that many Elders are like my mother and will share information when youth are interested.

So I would like to see programs in the schools and in communities where youth can connect with Elders, and our legacy, our traditions, and our culture can be passed on. Today, our youth are so into hairdos and rock music. If someone puts on a pow wow tape, they say,"Oh, turn that pow wow tape off and turn on that rock music." They don't want to listen to the Elders, so we need to empower our youth to be able to connect with their traditions.

The Elders are an ideal group in the community to help students verify and validate who they are and where they come from. When I do culturally relevant curriculum workshops, I tell the teachers, "You know, not to over-simplify the process of putting culturally relevant materials into the curriculum, but if you can replicate the child's home in the classroom you are making your curriculum culturally relevant."

There are various ways of doing that. For instance, through a language experience approach method of teaching language arts, you can get the students to relate what they know through pictures, through giving them a chance to reflect on experiences they've had, draw pictures, write stories, and then read each other's stories. I have seen schools where children were learning to read in first grade from their own stories that they wrote. They were the authors. Where the Elders came in is that they are the people who, in place of textbook publishers, come in and validate what the children are doing in regard to what is going on in the home.

Another method many people use is to have the Elders come in and talk to the kids, tell them stories, and so forth. This is great, but I think Elders can be used beyond that. They can come in and see what the children are doing, they can validate it, reinforce it, and even model for the children better things to do.

A lot of new research in effective language arts instruction is telling us not to correct children's grammar; that their word usage, sentence structure, and pronunciation will naturally evolve. So Elders can be used to model correct language for children who are working on learning their Native language.

We do need to brief Elders when we use them as paraprofessionals or language instructors. We mainly need to encourage them to be themselves. It is common to go into a school and presume there is an order already there, that somebody in a real holy place has invented "the American education system." But that isn't true; it evolved by accident. So Elders need to be encouraged to go in there and dream and do what they want to do--what they think is right.

Sometime I would like to take 100 people, selected at random, and take a series of topics and ask them to forget the research and the theory and come up with ideas of what they think would work best for, say, grades K through 2 language arts instruction. I would bet dollars to donuts--or dollars to fry bread--that you would come out with really creative action plans.

I am Oglala and I am on the faculty at MIT. I have a very select and gifted group of approximately 34 Native American students. I often ask them when they arrive to what they attribute their success at being accepted in such a competitive program. Almost consistently, across the board, they say something that I find true in my own personal experience. This is that we have one key relative--usually a grandparent--who encourages us when no one else does and who has very high expectations of us in spite of all the things that seem to impede our path to a competitive career. There is some grandpa or grandma back home who says, "Well, go for it. Try it!"

I would like to see some sort of telecommunication, or video communication by satellite perhaps, between the few best and brightest with our grandparents back home, because I think it is very important for the Elders to realize the contribution they make whether they understand physics, chemistry, or any of the experiences we are having with the curriculum at these schools. They need to know that in the beginning, they set the foundation that gave us the strength to carry through when other people didn't realize what kinds of achievements we were capable of.

This year I am particularly enlightened because I have a majority of students who are reservation born and educated, and we had our first full-blood who was accepted by early action, got 800 on his math SAT, and is on honor roll. Probably one-third of the Native students at MIT are in honors classes and graduating with phenomenal research projects. We just graduated a mechanical engineering student who was raised by his grandparents and graduated with honors. Even though he was offered a full scholarship to go to graduate school and every competitive engineering firm was interviewing him for a job, he chose to go back to Navajo country so he could have some interaction with his family and the community because he felt so depleted from his isolation in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

I just think it would be of benefit to us to have an ongoing conversation with the people back home. This would also allow our Elders to see and share our experiences via telecommunication, even if it were just a video of students going from recitation lab to other campus activities they enjoy. This would close the gap between the past and the future and share our successes with our Elders so they will realize how effective they have been.

III. Programs and Strategies that Work

I am reminded of the Winnebago tribe in Wisconsin where the tribal government has gotten actively involved and is using existing community custom and culture to address problems. In particular, they had invited me to address a summer youth camp program. There were speakers and there were also Elders there. Some were donating their time as cooks, as counselors, or just being available. I also saw that youth would tend to go over and spend time talking with them.

There is a hereditary chief for the tribe who attends all functions despite his age and his own health problems. He will be out there and he is honored as he brings his culture to nearly every tribal activity because that is what their tradition dictates.

I also saw the tribal chairman, whom I suspect is an Elder in his own right, but he defers to the Elders of his community and to the hereditary chief, showing them great respect. He acknowledges and ensures that the elected council addresses the problems of the elderly and involves Elders in all aspects of tribal policy and decision-making as resource people.

They also have a very strong health program there, where they provide medical services and transportation for the elderly. They have a fitness program. One woman from the University of Wisconsin wanted to come in and do aerobics with the elderly and when she came back, they were singing '49s and they had jingled, and that was their aerobics. The aerobics were changed and done in a fashion that was consistent with the culture.

They have Meals on Wheels to feed elderly and they ensure that those who can't make it in to the center have their meals taken out to them.

I know of one white man who was married to an Indian. He is in his 70s. His wife died and after a respectful amount of time had passed, the chief went to visit him and said, "Alvin, are you going back to your people, or are you going to stay with us?" Alvin had thought that he would have to leave and no longer be part of that circle. But the Elders considered him a part of that circle. He nearly cried, because after all of those years of having lived in the community and being married to an Indian woman, he finally realized that he was accepted by them. So they bring tribal health services and meals to this white man.

There are a lot of pow wows, community birthdays, and potluck kinds of things. They also plan extra activities. They took two vans down to the Ice Capades at the Dane County Coliseum, which is about 45 miles away. It was great to see these elderly people getting out to see this event. The next one they wanted to go to was the World Wrestling Federation.

It was physical activity, mental activity, caring, and providing that kind of support network. I think this gets at what you were talking about. If we believe that we are empowered to do something, whether or not we have the money, we will find a way. We will just have to devote our time to it.

In Zuni, with our tribally controlled situation and our school located right in the community, we have developed some intergenerational opportunities. We have a program called "Zuni Young Families" where we bring young women who are pregnant or have had children (and their spouses) back into school to continue their education. It includes a day care situation, which is an education child care lab and parenting program that goes along with the academics. An integral part of this is to bring in elderly citizens to impart their knowledge, experience, and teachings of proper child raising practices. They share the tribally acceptable ways and philosophy for child rearing.

As in other tribes, there are periods of time during the year when it is appropriate to talk about the tribal history and legends. Our time for this is in the late fall through winter, and it is the only time that we can talk about it. So we get elderly citizens to come in and share storytelling activities with the young children. We bring together the children, young parents, and Elders for a potluck meal. We recognize the Elders who will be giving the storytelling that week, and we audio and videotape them. Then the young parents themselves take those tapes to our tribally owned community educational FM station and they play them on the radio so others can hear them.

As part of our Youth Leadership Program, we also have community service projects for kids at different grade levels. Many of those projects involve working with elderly citizens, restoring the traditional ovens or building new ones, and other cultural activities. You don't just go out and build an oven. There are prayers that you have to say and offerings you have to make as you are building it, and that is information that the older people can give the younger people. So when they reach the age where they are going to build their own ovens in support of our tribal ceremonies and religion, they will know exactly how to do it. All of this is taking place in our language, and it is really good to see this type of interaction.

Our school district and the tribe have a wellness center, and we are looking at tribal wellness as a way of overcoming some of the issues of alcohol and substance abuse for both children and Elders. As part of the wellness program, we have special time periods where elderly citizens can come and use the gyms in our schools. This includes an adapted weight training program they can go through. This program brings them together with high school age kids.

There are a variety of ways that Elders can be involved with young people and they generate a really special kind of energy that goes back and forth; it creates a sense of respect for these citizens who have given so much to us.

In all of our special education programs we have elderly people involved along with our teachers and aides. There are many ways that elderly citizens can help look after the needs of exceptional children and support their efforts. We find those children to be more responsive to Elders in many ways, especially the ones that are severely disabled or physically handicapped.

I teach at Navajo Community College and we recently adopted a philosophy that was drawn from our Navajo way of life. I did the primary research on this and interviewed many people to learn the methodologies, the prayers, the songs, and to be able to see the organization of knowledge and what the purpose of life is.

The four areas that they recommend to achieve balance and be happy have to do with (1) the value of one's strength, (2) the ability to provide for oneself, (3) the ability to get along with others, and (4) one's relationship to the environment. These four areas are necessary, just as air, water, and the basic elements are necessary to plants. If you upset the balance of any one of these, it creates an imbalance in an individual. Within this belief structure, they usually bring in a medicine man to restore a person to balance.

When my findings went before the Navajo Community College Board of Regents, they recognized the validity of the traditional organization of knowledge and they adopted this philosophy. We are using it to reorganize the academic programs and to integrate the curriculum. This philosophy was also reviewed by the Navajo Native Medicine Man Association. It was presented to them several times, they have made recommendations and suggestions, and they have given us a resolution for the College.

In the organizational structures, identification of knowledge, and reorganizing the disciplines, we really utilized our Elders. Right now we are also working with them as resource people to help us redesign the courses we are teaching. So they are a very viable group in our academic programs at the college.

The philosophy also went into a lot of schools on the reservation, across the Navajo Nation. So some schools have adopted the same basic philosophy and are turning to their Elders to help them organize and develop their own academic programs.

So we are using that approach within our education system, and we have found a lot of things we could do to correct problems in the American education system. The most important thing we determined was that if we were going to educate our youth and turn the problems around, we would have to go back to our Elders and bring back the values and truths that have been tested by time. It seems to be working so far.

In the Navajo Nation we are using the substance abuse curriculum project to help students in grades K through 12 on the reservation. Within the Head Start programs, we are trying to touch all the bases with our Navajo youth, so they will know what it is to be in balance.

IV. Other Issues

- When we use the term "education," we usually refer to the organized systems of education sponsored by the BIA or the public schools. But all of the Native groups that I have come into contact with in my travels had educational approaches long before we were subjected to the mainstream system. Whether I am in Barrow, Alaska, or Torreon, New Mexico--where I started out in Indian education in the 1960s--I find that in spite of the school system, people are able to carry on their ways. As educators, we are missing out on a tremendous resource.

I think school board members have an obligation, when the school system isn't working for your children, to raise objections and do something about it. Demand that things be changed. The way it can be redesigned or refocused already exists to a certain extent in our traditional educational approaches.

I have taught beginners. While I was a Head Start director, I worked with Head Start teachers. I have taught beginners myself, taught middle school, high school, and college. But I have had to stop and examine what I was doing. I was basically trying to open the head and pour in information. I realized we never ask students what they already know. I think we need to do this through activities.

I honestly believe that if you replicate a child's first three or four years of experience in the home, in the classroom all the way through 12th grade, that child will be better prepared to be a good thinker, a good problem solver, and to have all of the reading, and writing skills in English and other languages. This would be motivated by the traditional education system.

V. Coming Full Circle

- I guess I am an Elder now, since I am a grandpa twice. I see the need to save some of our culture and some of our history. Even today as they are rapidly passing away, I look back and think of a person who taught me something, and they are gone. Somehow, we must get these things documented. We must document their words and their expressions and their images, so the children can see what they looked like.

I see my grandmother in her late 80s and she has lost a lot of her memory, but I remember many of the things she told me. The other grandmother has been gone for a long time, but she taught me how to look for different plants. You know, we don't get that in our school system. We have to go back into our schools, bring these Elders to teach the children what the plants are, what the days mean, what the water is for. There is little respect anymore. We need to utilize our Elders.

Sure there is a lot of alcoholism and drug addiction and trauma out there. Our parents and grandparents and their parents were traumatized, placed on reservations, placed in boarding schools as if they were prisoners of war. We need to have counseling in these areas. But we need to utilize what we have today. Our ceremonies need to be put in our schools to show our children how important they are, to help them grow and to know that they aren't alone.

You can put a kid who has been traumatized in a whole room of kids the same age and he will still feel alone. Until I found out who I was and what I meant as a human being, I felt alone. It was my grandmothers and my grandfathers who told me I was not alone and I always looked up to them. As I go on in my life I remember them every day.

I still remember my father--he was an alcoholic. He died an alcoholic death because he didn't know how to be a human being. Those are tragedies. My children will not know their grandfather, nor their uncles who have passed on. And I hope to God I am around so my grandchildren will know me.

We need something--we need the funding--to lift these grandparents up out of poverty. If you go to my reservation you will find that they live here on a measly grant. We don't have enough care facilities for them, or vehicles to get around. Some are alcoholics. They are left out on the streets. We have forgotten how to take care of ourselves and we need to get those skills back. We need to have respect and love each other again. These were taken away from us, but slowly they are coming back.

The ceremonies are slowly coming back. I myself learned a few years ago what it was like to be in a sweat lodge. This summer I participated in my first sun dance. It has changed my life. Before, I was always on this road to get rich, never getting there because, as I have heard before, only one percent of America holds all the money--so you can never get there. So I'm just going to learn how to be happy, and that is what we need to teach our children. Learn to be yourself--you don't hear that.

INAR/NACIE Joint Issues Sessions
NIEA 22nd Annual Conference - San Diego, California
October 16, 1990

"Special Session for Students and Elders to Address the Task Force and NACIE"

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Summary: "Special Session for Students and Elders to Address the Task Force and NACIE

The special session for Students and Elders to Address the Task Force and NACIE was co-hosted by INAR Task Force member Terrel Bell and NACIE Council member Bob Chiago. The following issues, recommendations, and exemplary programs were discussed:

I. Defining Student Issues

- Students' concerns depend on their educational level. At the college level, some of the concerns are scholarships and finding the right schools to go to. Some of the concerns at the high school level are related to choosing careers. I know a number of students who are not sure what they want to do--whether they want to go to college or whether they even want to graduate from high school.

- About 64 percent of Native Americans are in college now (approximately 90,000). I think educators have been making a lot of progress, and they ought to be--all those who are members of this organization ought to be proud of how far they've come. Of course, we've got a long way to go yet, and one is never totally satisfied.

- I work as the director of a tribal education department, the Salt River Pima Maricopa Community, and I've been there for two years. We've found there is still about a 75 percent dropout rate. I think of the report that came out back in the late 1960s, early 1970s that gave rise to the Indian Education Act and some of those same statistics, such as the 75 percent dropout rate, are ones we still have today.

- Nationwide, including all students, the dropout rate is around 30 percent. We have about three and a half million students across the country on each grade level and a million, fifty thousand of them don't finish school. In the big cities the dropout rate is really, really high.

- One of the things we've found in Salt River is that there seems to be negative peer pressure in some cases among Indian students. For example, when some students do well, some of the other students seem to give them negative treatment, saying, "You shouldn't be doing well because the rest of us are not."

II. Postsecondary Education

Teacher Training and Competency Exams

- Northern Arizona University used to produce a lot of Native American teachers, but it has fallen off. There was a program called the Teacher Corps that was instituted on the Navajo and Hopi Reservations. We had a large cadre of teachers who went through the program, and they are now teaching. But now we need to replace those people because within the next five years, they are going to be retiring from the educational system. I see teacher preparation programs throughout the country, and I like to look at them to see what their programs are about. Of course, Northern Arizona University is accredited by NK. NK states that you must provide at least one class or some information in the area of working with diversity of cultures that exist in the country today. If you look at our educational system you will find no courses under the required areas include this. We're more like a baby sitting service where we try to integrate these courses--or these contents or these issues and topics into the curriculum, and that is not going to work. I realize that students have to take so many hours in order to graduate, but I feel personally one more class in teaching Native Americans or teaching cultures from different areas would make a world of difference to those who are going into the field of education. Our institutions paint this picture that everything is just so out there, and if you're placed in a student teaching environment, then if it goes well--that's the way it's going to be. But we paint a very negative concept of what teacher education is all about. When student teachers go out to a reservation and don't know how to speak the Native language or aren't culturally sensitive, then a lot of blame is put on them.

- I'm a senior in the teacher education program at Northern Arizona University. I'm a mature student, as you can see. But, when I first started college, I found that I was not prepared in some areas. My background is mostly from Bureau schools and I went to Indian schools most of my life. This seems to be a problem with a lot of Indian students. Five years ago, there were approximately 177 Indian students at Northern Arizona in teacher education. Yet, at the beginning of the 1990 fall session, there were only 35 students. To me, this is a really sad situation. I find it very disappointing that there aren't more teacher candidates.

  I think the decrease has a lot to do with the Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST) instituted in Arizona about five years ago. Since then, the enrollment in teacher education seems to have really dropped. The competency test is composed of reading, writing, and math. Currently at Northern Arizona University and other Arizona schools, you have to pass the competency test before you are admitted into the teacher training program. You are not allowed to take teacher education classes unless you pass that test. What happens is that a lot of Native American students who can't pass the test drop out or go into other fields. The reason they cannot pass the test is that they were not properly prepared at the elementary and secondary level. I find that a lot of Native American students have to take courses to help them prepare for these tests, and I think that we should have already had that preparation, during high school.

  I graduated from high school more than 20 years ago, and it seems to me that the younger students should have had a better education than I did. However, based on just the results of the competency and college admissions tests, this doesn't seem to be the case. It really concerns me, especially because my own children are in school.

I will hopefully teach third grade next year. My emphasis is on bilingual education. I'm a Hopi and a pretty fluent speaker of the language. I hope I will be able to teach Hopi children and that I will use our language and culture in my teaching. From the methods courses I have taken in bilingual education I have learned that just because you speak fluently doesn't mean that you can write or think equally well. So there is that difference. It seems to me, from my educational background in the Bureau system, they taught us how to read and write, but they weren't really strong on helping us develop our cognitive skills.

I have heard about the competency exam in almost every hearing, whether it's a hearing like this or one on academic standards or one on special education. It keeps coming up. So it seems to me that something has to be done about it. Many critics of the school system say, "Well, you give students a diploma when they can't read and they can't write and they can't handle mathematics." That's been said so much that many state legislatures have passed a law requiring an examination. The problem is that some people are good test takers and others aren't. Some are quite intelligent, but they just sort of freeze up when they confront an examination. And if this is causing us to lose people who would otherwise be good teachers, and if it's keeping some from getting further education, then we should do something about it. I don't know what should be done. I believe it's important that we have standards so that when students graduate from school--whether they get a high school diploma or a college degree--they are well educated. Sometimes you are well educated, but you can't put it down on paper in an examination.

I remember an examination I took once. I had some squares I filled in on an answer sheet. When I was almost through, I found out I didn't have the answer sheet lined up correctly. Then it was too late. It wasn't a serious exam, but if it had been, it would have been terrible. It seems to me to have somebody's future determined by one examination is not very good. Sometimes you may not be feeling well the day you take the exam. Now, these aren't excuses. These are circumstances that happen often. I don't know what should be done about that, but I've heard it so much during these meetings yesterday and today that I've become convinced it isn't just an isolated problem. It's a problem that many people face and worry about. Education should help people get ahead, have a better life, and be happier. So I'm concerned about that. Maybe the Task Force can come up with some recommendations in this area.

I don't know if we can really come up with an answer to the problem, but I think a lot of these tests are culturally biased, and that is part of the problem. We need to set high expectations for educating our Indian students from the beginning so that they have these goals to look forward to. I think in everything you have to have some sort of test you must pass for admission or to get a job. I think schools should teach their students how to take tests successfully.

I don't know how useful instruction in test-taking skills would be. Maybe that needs to be part of educating Indian students--how to take tests so they'll be successful like other kids.

I know that some parents hire tutors to prepare their children for these examinations. This puts those children whose parents don't do that or those who come out of a different culture at a further disadvantage.

I serve on the board of directors of the Educational Testing Service in Princeton, New Jersey. They publish the SAT, a lot of the college entrance exam tests, and the advanced placement test where you can take a course and take an examination and you'll get college credit for it while you're still in high school. As we've studied our testing practices in that company, using computers and computer analysis--some of the things that we're learning are surprising. For instance, the SAT is apparently biased against women. It's supposed to predict how well you'll do in college. And generally first year freshmen women do better in college than their male counterparts, but they tend to score lower than males on the SAT.

I say all that to emphasize that I think we need to be very careful about tests and how we use them, especially when we make decisions that affect people's lives, and I'd urge all of you to speak up on behalf of the Indian students. I wonder if they're not being hurt unfairly by these tests. Native Americans get hurt enough without being hurt by that. So I just express my concern and worry about it.

I'm an assistant professor at Northern University, and these are two of my students who are here as part of a classroom requirement. I just want to say one thing when we're talking about the PPST exam and all other exams--for example GREs and so forth--being culturally biased. Number one is that I grew up on a reservation. I attended the BIA schools. I was physically and psychologically ridiculed for speaking my Native language. Although my background includes growing up in both rural and urban areas, I think I've adapted very well.

Maybe I have been Americanized too much. I am an assistant professor at NAU in the area of teacher preparation programs. I see a lot of my students coming through the educational system, either sophomores or juniors, and again they're facing the PPST examination. There are other ways and other avenues for getting around that exam, although I don't really encourage my students to do that. I've gone back and looked at some of the figures, and it's just astonishing to see the numbers of Native American people not going into education today because of this exam. I tell people if this exam is giving you problems, then there are other institutions that don't require the PPST exam and they can seek their education from a different school. I attended NAU and graduated from NAU--I received undergraduate and master's degrees there--and I went through the same educational system.

It is very difficult for me to see my students come through the system, take this test, and all of a sudden they are stopped and told that they cannot continue their education. They are juniors now and they only have one more semester left--and they can't start taking any of these educational courses because of this barrier facing them.

When we talk about teacher training and teacher preparation programs, we need more minority students coming into education. Our institutions do an excellent job of recruiting minority students into varying types of educational programs; however, they do a very poor job of retaining our Native American students. If you'll look at the entrance rates compared to the graduation rates, there is no comparison. You will find that the students are being neglected, both academically and socially, along the way because there is no real academic support.

I am a teacher, and after my 12 years of higher education I am at the point now where I'm able to help my people and accomplish the goals they set for themselves. So it's very difficult for me to try to encourage my students by saying, "Come on. You can do it. You can do it," but also to see that there is a barrier here. So what do you tell the students? I can only do so much because there's only one of me; however, I hope throughout the country, my colleagues and I can perhaps get together and brainstorm this issue about preparing more Native American teachers.

- We have mentioned culturally biased tests; I think we would eliminate a lot of those problems by implementing bilingual education in elementary education at an early age.

- Do you think that if examinations were oral--if you didn't write them but they were taken across the table from an examiner--they would be less intimidating to a child?

- I guess it depends on who was sitting on this side of the table. It might be intimidating if the person were Anglo.

- The PPST is a state requirement. Regarding NAU's sensitivity to the problems posed by this exam, it has been noted that there have been some problems and we've tried to go through some recommendations about the PPST exam. For example, there are cut-off scores for reading, writing, and math. They range from 171 to 173 for the State of Arizona. In my few years at NAU, I've never once been asked by the administration to take a serious look at this and come up with some recommendations on what we can do. Although we do have a Native American Indian Education Association on campus, at one point in time we addressed our administration and said, "Look. We have students who may be within so many points of these scores. What can we do for these students?" We came up with an idea we call the window approach, and that is if you're within three points of the passing score of any of these exams, you are admitted provided you take a course that will substitute for the actual course itself or the exam portion of it. This is how we've gotten a lot of Native Americans through the system. And you know, the PPST exam only measures how well you take tests, it doesn't measure your teaching ability.

I just want to make two final comments about NAU. Number one is that our president at the university is very supportive of Native Americans on campus and also doing as much as he possibly could for the people here. He's very supportive because of some of the programs that he's implemented such as the New Momentum Project. In addition, he has signed agreements and partnerships with some of the Native American tribes in Arizona. The president is doing as much as he can. He's very sensitive to the needs of the students on campus.

One more important thing is that NAU used to be a teacher preparation college. At one point in time, it was called Arizona State College. I personally feel that NAU should be the mass producer of Native American teachers because we are located near one of the largest Native American tribes on this continent today. Yet, we fall perhaps fourth in the country in

Native American enrollments. I've gone public with this statement, and I strongly feel that perhaps we need to take a look at it one more time.

Career Guidance

- My child who is a senior has been talking about a lot of goals. He wants to be an engineer technician, but he doesn't know what kind of an engineer specifically. I think the colleges need to give more information about what type of career goals they're going to be offering. Now, he's thinking about becoming a civil engineer.

III. Elementary and Secondary Education

Parental Involvement

- My personal experience is that my son was tested with the CTBS test administered through the Bureau, and he scored real low. They told him he had to be retained. He was in the sixth grade and couldn't go on to seventh grade. As a parent, they wanted me to sign off on this. Usually the teachers and administrators call parents in to discuss a problem and ask the parent to sign off on a decision without giving the parent an option. Well, I said I didn't want to sign it. I said, "I know my child is better than that." And I said, "The test determines he can't read or write, but I know his potential." And so he therefore went on ahead. I promoted him myself. The next year he was an honor student. He had real good grades all year, and I was glad I hadn't signed sign those papers to have him retained. He is going to be graduating this year and is thinking of going to college. So with my personal experience, I think parents should be really involved in their children's education. Also I want to emphasize that a lot of teachers intimidate parents when they come into the classroom. I think teacher candidates need to have a course in parental involvement so that they'll know how to involve parents.

- I would like to see parents more involved in determining what their children are learning, because I think if they have a direct involvement in deciding what is included in the curriculum, they will be more interested in helping their children. So I think that might be one answer. Educators tend to say, "Well, those Indian parents aren't educated, you know, so how can we expect them to learn?" But those parents, even though they may not have a formal education, are just as intelligent as others. They have common sense and a desire to learn about what their children are learning, and from that base they will begin to help their children become educated and better prepared.

- I'm really glad that we're finally beginning to do away with the Indian school concept because I went to a boarding school and felt that it deprived me of a lot--especially contact with my parents. Education doesn't begin when you step into a classroom. It begins from the moment you're born. I think that parents should be involved in their children's education--as long as they're able to participate. It seems that in our schools, parent involvement is limited to things like fund-raising. To me, there is more to parent involvement than fund-raising. A parent needs to be involved in decisions about what their children should be learning, how they should be learning, and how education is relevant to their future. I think that is really missing in our educational process. It seems to me that educators in our local schools tend to make a mystery of what education is all about, so that parents are intimidated about participating in their child's education. Somehow we create a professional-client relationship where they are worlds apart. I think this is part of the reason why our children aren't doing well in school. So we need to be more concerned about involving our parents in what their children learn.

- I was raised by a single parent and grew up in a family of nine children. I was third from the bottom in a family of nine, and my father was killed when I was eight years old. But I didn't know there was a great disadvantage there because I had such a good mother. She knew how to be tough and to love you at the same time. That's what you need in a parent. Parents make a big difference, and I think we are hearing that very clearly. We need to get them more involved in education. I think maybe the schools need to do more to make the parents feel welcome and comfortable at school and in meeting with the teachers. I often think they don't feel that.

The Boarding Schools

- We need to really update or make the boarding schools a little more comfortable than they are. The children don't want to go there in the first place. But you have to send them there and it's hard to leave home. And you're freezing and you don't have enough blankets. They use the old military blankets which makes you itch all night long and it's very uncomfortable. My child complains about it every day when he calls.

I would like to know why they are doing this since education is very important. My son who is in school now at Sherman Indian School, calls home and tells me that there's no hot water and it's cold over there, and he's got a cold. I think that this is part of the facilities management problem.

- I just want to comment on a few things mentioned earlier about dormitory life. I grew up in a dormitory. It was a home for me away from my own home, and at that time it was okay for me. But now, when I go back and look at the dorms and look at what they're doing, it seems like a lot of the students have left the dorm life and have gone into public schools. They don't want to stay in the dorm, and I guess the parents themselves think that they're not getting the education they should be getting in the BIA school system. I believe it's that way because the BIA employees--the teachers and the dorm maids--need to upgrade their standards. I believe that's the main thing--the parents don't want to send their kids there because of that. I myself am a parent and I have kids whom I wouldn't send to the dorm because of those reasons. So I propose that the standards set for BIA employees should be upgraded.

Tribal Efforts with Public Schools

- Our tribe in Arizona was able to reduce the dropout rate and triple the graduation rate this past year. Almost 100 percent of the students from our tribe attend a public school adjacent to the reservation. The reservation is located right next to the boundary lines of the city of Scottsdale on the west side, and on the south side next to the city of Mesa. All the students from our district go to school in the Mesa Public School District, with the exception of those few who go to the BIA operated school on the reservation.

One of the things that we wanted to do at the beginning of last year was to find out how we could reduce the dropout rate. So we had to try, to the extent possible, to get as much information about the students as possible, keep track of them, and establish some communication between the various schools our students were attending and our office--so that we could try to provide supplemental services to students who were having difficulty in school. Primarily through coordination, I think we were able to have some success this past year.

There are a lot of difficulties out there. There are students that we've identified, as a result of our communication with the district, who have special needs that have not been addressed. We are beginning to identify a lot of students from the community with fetal alcohol syndrome. We are trying to find some resources for our children who have that special problem. Other students don't have role models, at least at home. They may be second or third generation welfare recipients, and they think, "Well, why should I go to school? I can just stay at home and collect welfare after I reach a certain age."

Part of our effort is to try to do things to make school important to them, possibly through activities--maybe not necessarily associated with strict academics, but maybe even sports. So we've been trying to conduct activities similar to a music program in which students who want to learn to play musical instruments are asked to maintain a certain attendance and grade point average. We are trying to establish some incentives other than just the education itself to try to keep our kids in school.

The BIA Reorganization

I am a member of the Cocopah Tribe and have been on the tribal council since July. We are a newly recognized tribe located south of Yuma, right near the Quechan Reservation. Next week, we're meeting with the Quechan Tribe to discuss education issues, and that is why they sent me here--to see where education is. We have a tribal member who is the director of education in Phoenix. He's out of a job now. We're concerned because we have a lot of problems with educating Indians, and I'm just looking for answers to see if anybody knows what is really going on. My main concern is why the BIA chose to realign its system. I don't understand this. I just got on the tribal council, and the Bureau just pulled this one on us, and it affects education.

We've had education problems in my tribe as far back as I can remember. I'm different. I was eight before I started to learn English. I entered school when I was seven. Up until that time I mostly spoke my language. I don't know the system in boarding schools because my tribe was just federally recognized in 1971. I wasn't recognized as a tribal member or an Indian until then, so I wasn't privileged to go to these boarding schools. I was in public schools most of my life, and now the rolls have been opened to my tribe, so there are kids who have started going to boarding schools.

The majority of our kids go to public schools. My tribe is still primitive and people don't go to the public schools because schools have been prejudiced. I also had to face prejudice as I was growing up in the school system. Raised by Elders, I didn't know one word of English when I went to school and Head Start wasn't around then. We have now included Head Start and all the other educational programs available to us, and now we find out that they're taking that education away from us. The tribes can carry education on without relying on BIA. But to top things off, they're taking that education program away from us. I don't know how it affects all Arizona tribes. But I just know that we're being affected by it.

The tribe is considering going with the office in Sacramento and I guess that's our reason for meeting with the Quechan Tribe. They're in California right across the river from us. Our regional office is being closed; the superintendent claims that they were not informed of the actions area office took in closing out the education programs.

I am somewhat familiar with this. I work with an Arizona tribe as the director of education for the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community. About 20 years ago, I was the director of education for the Navajo Nation. So I've been somewhat involved with the Bureau education programs. We do have a BIA school on our reservation--even though it's adjacent to Scottsdale and Mesa--that serves students in grades K through 6. One of the things we all know is that the Bureau has been unsuccessful in providing a good education for Indian children, at least in general. There are exceptions to that--there are some good BIA schools. I believe part of the reason there are some good BIA schools is because of the local leadership in those schools--the principal and the people who work in those schools. But very often, probably in most cases, we find bad schools.

Back in 1972, in testimony presented concerning the Jackson Bill, I myself recommended some reorganization of the Bureau and, in fact, recommended a Bureau of Indian Education as well as a Bureau of other types of activities. It appears that someone may have read my testimony and come up with some new recommendations but not necessarily the same that had been recommended back then. Right now, with the Bureau schools, the authority to run the schools goes from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Education down through the agency superintendents of education down to the principals. Then there is a separate authority from the Assistant Secretary down to the area directors and then down to the agency superintendents. Some people have responsibility for certain aspects of what happens in the schools, while others have different authority. I think part of the realignment, from what I understand, is to put some of the authority with the responsibility; in other words, mesh the two together.

Right now, for instance, at our school in Salt River, facilities management is not under the principal or under the education people within the chain of command. Facilities management is with the agency superintendent. Procurement goes through the agency superintendent. There's a problem in terms of authority between things such as that. Part of my understanding about realignment is that it will put authority with responsibility. I understand that there are approximately 108 BIA-operated schools within the country. There are maybe 60 or 70 contract schools that are BIA funded, in addition to the 108 BIA operated schools which contract with the tribe or the community.

There are 33 field offices to operate 108 BIA schools. In the district I work with, there is one district, and the field office is very similar in function to a district--at least that's the theory. In the Mesa Public School District that our students attend, there are about 40 or 50 schools that are operated only by one district. I think the Bureau's intention is to try to do some reorganization and maybe try to provide a better education. But the Bureau, as usual, probably does a partial rather than a full job. They also don't explain too well the purposes of what they are doing. Although they have consultation hearings, it has been a bit confusing. For example, at one of the hearings, they were trying to duplicate a huge package of papers explaining their reorganization plans. They should have gotten these out to the tribes before they held the hearings so that the tribes might have had an opportunity to respond to and at least review what they were planning to do. But instead, they came in and then they found that they didn't have copies for everyone, so they tried to make copies at the same time they were having hearings. Then they had other hearings and they've been having hearings and more hearings. The latest we've heard is that our area education office is going to be abolished and the functions provided by that office are going to be taken over by some of the more local agencies. So there's a lot of confusion, and I think that is causing some difficulties.

There are representatives from BIA here at the conference, including down in the exhibit area. They might have additional information pertinent to what's going on in your specific area with the reorganization. They certainly should be able to answer some questions about it.

The director of the BIA Office of Education, Ed Parisian, does sit in on our business meetings and is involved in what's going on in the Task Force because everybody believes it is important for the BIA to coordinate with ED and the INAR Task Force.

IV. One Woman's Experience

I'm a full-blooded Navajo from White Cone. White Cone is located about 65 miles north of Holbrook. I attended schools at King's Canyon for seven years and then at Snowflake, and they're all BIA schools. I had a chance to go to college right out of high school, but I decided to get married and provide a home for my younger brother and sisters. Since we lost our mother when I was at the young age of 12, I made a personal commitment to keep my siblings together for as long as possible. So I married and became a housewife and a mother, and now I'm a grandmother.

My schooling at King's Canyon was quite different from the last two schools I attended. The employees there had us speak English; we were always punished for speaking our own language. The dorm maids were called matrons at the time. They used to tell us that it is impolite to speak your own language when someone who doesn't understand it is there to hear because they might think you are talking about them, and I understood that.

I went to school there with a lot of Hopis. I had started to learn a few of their expressions and words when I left. Maybe if we hadn't been restrained from using our Native languages, I could have been speaking Hopi too. I just feel that the government has really cheated us out of our own language and culture as students. If we were taught to appreciate our own language and culture at an early age, maybe a lot of my peers wouldn't be on skid row. It hurts me to see these people on skid row.

My high school years were a lot different from elementary school. In high school, we were allowed to speak our own language if we wanted to. Unfortunately, I had lost a lot of my own language because I hadn't been allowed to speak it, though I could understand it very well. While in high school, I had to learn my language over again so I could fit in socially with my classmates. After a couple of years I learned to speak Navajo fluently again.

I was employed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs as an educational aide for seventeen and a half years. Then I decided to take early retirement because of several reasons. First, I was just not getting anywhere with a dead-end position. Second, when a new teacher came in, I would have to devote most of my time to training this new teacher about how the BIA curriculum works. Mainly I felt I could teach my own people and should get the pay the teachers were getting because I was just as good as they were and sometimes even better.

I then decided to go back to school and get my bachelor's degree in elementary education so I could do what I liked best and get paid for it. In the summer of 1987, I went to Arizona State University for one semester. I didn't like it because I felt out of place. The school was too big. Then I enrolled at Gateway Community College. I took several courses there and was able to obtain my AA in general studies. Thanks to the Navajo tribal scholarship, I was able to attend summer school in 1989 at Northern Arizona University. I registered for the fall of 1989 and thought that I was going to get things going, but I had some problems. I had accumulated a lot of hours because I was going to school every summer when I was employed by the BIA. I took classes that really didn't pertain to my specific major for at least 10 semesters. I guess I just didn't know what I wanted to major in then.

In 1984, I quit going to summer school and couldn't take any more methods classes because of the Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST) test that we had to take as an undergraduate to get admitted to the college of Education. I was unable to pass the reading and writing part of the test, but I did pass the math part. I just couldn't afford to take another test, so I didn't take it again. The college wanted me to pass the test before I would be allowed to use the Pell Grant monies. Also, my hours exceed the 144 maximum hours allowed by the government.

Fortunately, I was a Navajo so I just relied on the Navajo tribal scholarship to finish up this semester. Then I finally decided I was getting nowhere, so I decided to just complete a general studies degree and then go back and take the Arizona Teacher Proficiency Exam. That way I would be detouring the PPST exam and I could finish the four methods courses to do my student teaching, so I will end up with a bachelor's degree in elementary education.

INAR/NACIE Joint Issues Sessions
NIEA 22nd Annual Conference - San Diego, California
October 16, 1990

"Open Discussion with NACIE and Task Force Members"

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Summary: "Open discussion with NACIE and Task Force Members"

The open discussion with NACIE and Task Force Members was hosted by INAR Task Force Co-Chair William Demmert and NACIE Council member Robert Chiago. The following issues, concerns, and recommendations were discussed:

I. Overview of the Issues

- During the Reagan years, Indians witnessed the loss of teacher education programs, decreased funding for innovative ideas, almost no money for construction of facilities, reduced funding levels of entitlement programs never reached, boarding schools fighting for survival, and disregard of treaty rights. Memberships and appointments to the National Advisory Council of Indian Education were not made in a timely manner, and other appointments of Indian people to other boards were seriously delayed. From an education administrator's point of view, I believe the following occurred during the 1980s:

  - Among Indian students, dropouts, absenteeism, tardiness, and lower academic achievement have increased.

  - Drug and alcohol use has increased among Indian students because positive recreation programs and facilities on reservations are lacking.

  - There is now a 50 percent or better chance a student will come from a home that is affected by drugs and/or alcohol. This contributes to a learning environment within which it is difficult for all students to function. Many of the support programs that were available no longer exist. The loss of these programs decreased opportunities for the academic success of many of our students.

  - Funding to support single-parent students in our schools has been unavailable. Many of these students may become grandparents by age 30.

  - We have students graduating from college, but fewer of them are returning to their reservations because no jobs are available there.

  - There is an increase in the number of students attending our schools who come from homes with unemployed parents. Unemployment in the 1980s reached 80 percent on many reservations.

- As the lack of education opportunities in the 1980s are being discussed, as the problems that exist among our students are debated, as programs to meet the unique needs of Native students are developed, and as appropriations are fought for, some direction to meet these needs must be developed. I would like to recommend that NACIE and the Task Force consider the following:

- Teacher training programs that are administered by tribal community colleges and four-year institutions in cooperation with the local education agencies should be developed and funded.

- Alternative education programs should be established to meet the employment needs of the next century. This includes the high-risk and single-parent students who make up a large percentage of the semi-skilled or non-college-trained workforce.

- A format should be developed to recognize, promote, and encourage employers and colleges to recruit our outstanding, academically successful students.

- State education departments should be encouraged to set standards that require a review process of all materials used for curriculum and instruction, and to periodically review and update library materials.

- Congress and the White House should increase funding for programs to the local education agencies that implemented programs for decreasing dropout rates, tardiness, and absenteeism.

- A process should be established for local education agencies, government leaders, and community people to address the outrageous use of drugs and alcohol among our youth. This should include positive reinforcement, encouragement, and recognition of those students who are alcohol and drug free.

- Local education agencies should be encouraged to develop bilingual education programs that will assist the limited English proficient students. The English-only school setting continues to show our students have lower test scores, lower grade point averages, lower high school graduation percentages, and lower self-esteem because public schools continue to use programs and standardized tests that are normed with mainstream Americans.

- The President and his Cabinet should fulfill their pledge to appoint Indian leaders to NACIE and other important boards in a timely manner. The direction and expertise they can provide is critical to our future.

- The President must submit a budget to Congress that includes full funding of all Indian education entitlement programs. Funding for non-entitlement programs should receive the same consideration.

- The President should be encouraged to deliver a State of Indian Affairs address to the nation similar to the one given by President Nixon. This would demonstrate to the world his recognition of, support for, and legal obligations to the first Americans.

I have real concerns for our Indian children's educational well-being in the public schools. I believe we must take our role as educators, parents, and teachers far more seriously than we now do. We are responsible for teaching our children to be tomorrow's leaders, parents, and educators. I believe we must hold our educational systems accountable for how and what they are teaching our children. I believe our government must also be held accountable for upholding its part of our treaty rights to educate our Indian children. Many non-Indian educators believe that our children or Indian families do not pay taxes and therefore they do not have to go out of their way to educate our Indian children. I believe we need to implement statewide plans to educate citizens about Indian history and Indian treaty rights. It always amazes me how ignorant people are nationwide when it comes to Indian history, culture, and our rights. Many seem to still believe we are living in the 1800s and find it hard to believe that after 200 years we still practice our religion and our ceremonies. They thought by this time that we all would have been "civilized." I'm being facetious, but my point is that we need to implement a nationwide plan to educate these people, educate our Congresspeople, educate our legislators--educate these people who make the laws.

The problems our Indian children face in the public schools are phenomenal: discrimination, misunderstanding, ignorance, low expectations, over identification for special education, remedial education programs, misplacement of our gifted children in high-risk programs, and intimidation of our Indian parents. I believe the INAR Task Force has its work cut out for it. This investigation and the testimony from Indian people must be heard and taken in all sincerity.

Society's problems with chemical substance abuse must be addressed. Prevention and treatment programs must be a top priority. The myth that this is a problem of Indian or low-income people has to be stopped. We will not overcome the numerous problems of this drug scene unless we act in full force to not tolerate and live with it in our society.

As role models of Indian children and tomorrow's leaders, are we comfortable in what we are modeling? Can we afford to say, "Do as I say and not as I do?" I think not. As parents, teachers, administrators, and lawmaking bodies, it is imperative that we take a serious look at ourselves and act accordingly. We cannot continue to deny ourselves, our families, and our children a better tomorrow. We are important, we are loved, and our children deserve a better life.

Our financial disparity in education is a real problem nationwide, as we are reminded on a daily basis. I often wonder if our country will ever overcome the national financial deficit that we face. This truly is a national tragedy.

I commend the INAR Task Force for undertaking such a task of this magnitude. For our children's future in this world, I can only offer my support for the recommendations that will come from this effort.

I'd like to paraphrase some of the statements made in the general session by Mr. John Tippeconnic. His vision was to increase academic cognitive skills to enable the Native Americans to succeed. Teachers will have high expectations for their students and use new skills and new styles in communications, math, and science. Education will become more of a priority. And teacher performance will be improved through salary and training. But it all comes down to funding, and this year, especially this year, we're faced with the fact that the education system may be placed on 22 days furlough. Even though it is a discontinued furlough, the students will lose one month out of the school year. It may be best to implement more funding, or it may be time to exempt the education system from these cuts or figure out a way of better consolidating the funding for the educational system so that we don't have to continuously worry about shortening the school year for the students.

II. Program Recommendations from the Pueblo

The Pueblo believe that more educational programs need to be developed to meet the special and unique needs of the multihandicapped students. These programs should be designed so that these students can achieve a level whereby they can do some tasks for themselves and eventually, to the extent possible, become independent.

The Pueblo recommend that more education programs be developed to address the needs of gifted and talented students. All too often the schools are concerned with meeting only the needs of the students who require remedial services, and the gifted and talented students are left behind. We need to ensure that our gifted and talented students remain stimulated so they do not become bored with their schooling.

The Pueblo believe that our schools need to refer our gifted and talented students to the various private preparatory schools. It is the Pueblo understanding that many private schools are trying to recruit Indian gifted and talented students. The schools serving our students need to take advantage of this opportunity.

The Pueblo recommend that school districts implement student exchange programs within their school districts. This will allow the students to be exposed to the various educational processes within a school district.

In many tribes, pregnancy and alcohol and drug abuse are major problems that cause some of our students to drop out of school. The Pueblo recommend that school districts promote the concept of alternative school programs. These programs would assist our students to complete their schooling. This would also assist the Indian nations in rehabilitating our students and help them become productive citizens of our communities.

III. Native Language and Culture

- I have been threatened because I questioned what was going on in tribal government and BIA government. They have such a fear of losing their jobs that they've threatened my life. But I'm beyond that because I see the need for planning for the future education of our Indian children. Things have been lost over the decades. I was told never to speak Indian. I never learned my language. My grandparents had told my parents not to teach me because you were whipped and belittled by the people in boarding schools. I can understand my Native language, but I cannot speak it. I lost a lot of the culture. This needs to be brought out as much as possible. We're losing ground and our schools need to implement the language from K through 12 to college. When you're seven years old, you've learned everything you're going to learn about how to talk, and that part of your brain loses that ability. It's so hard to learn another language. Maybe we need to start in preschool.

The state needs to work into their teacher training curriculum a mandatory course in Indian studies to foster a better understanding of the various tribal cultures of the Indian students. There is so much misunderstanding and lack of knowledge of the culture and traditions of the Indian students that it leads to a lack of self-esteem and low self-images of our students.

IV. Health, Wellness, and Housing

- Yesterday I talked about people raised on reservations having post-traumatic stress disorder and I walked downstairs and found this report put out by Arrow, Inc., that I'd like to present as part of my testimony. We need counseling for families. We need counseling skills, parenting skills, and everything else that is available for the trauma that has been caused to us as Indian people over 200 years or more.

- We talk about drugs and alcohol and the need for a treatment center right in our home town. There is so much denial out there about what is going on, but we need those facilities. We helped write the plans for a regional treatment center hoping to get one in our area, but it's going to be about 400 miles away from us. We hoped it would be no further than about 150 miles away.

We did an estimate of how many people were actually working in the field of sobriety on our reservation of 18,000 people. There were only eight places people with problems could go and approximately 20 people working in that field. With 83 to 90 percent unemployment in the wintertime and the alcohol consumption rate as high as it is, we need more funding and we need more certified people. We talk about suicide, and I helped bury three kids this year from my high school. There are car accidents that don't need to happen and there are beatings that people die from.

I heard something today that made me realize that there is still abuse occurring in some of our schools because our teachers don't know how to treat the students. The school I'm representing is working on having everybody look at their own behaviors. Out of 87 staff members, 30 went through six days of intensive training in alcoholism, and slowly but surely are coming around. You have to have a person at the top of the ladder who understands alcoholism and trauma and who doesn't allow these behaviors to get out of line. The system is already in place where you can use a chain of command; however, that chain of command has been abused many times.

I'm proud of our school and it's coming around. Of the 300 high school students that we got the first month in September, approximately 90 percent are still there, and that is great. We put some limits on the people that could come to our school. If they dropped out of another school because of behavior problems, they couldn't come until the next semester, they had to change their behavior, and they had to receive counseling.

We had to fight for our counselors. We had to turn away people who did not know about alcoholism, and yet they had a counseling degree. The system was not adequate at the time; we have to add to it and make sure these people know what they're talking about.

- We need to look at the Indian housing programs and make some recommendations to stop the cluster home concept. They have created pockets of poverty in our communities--Indian ghettos--that are affecting the education of our children. Children coming from poor communities and living in the cluster homes are often the ones late for school and not doing well.

- I urge the Task Force and the National Advisory Council on Indian Education to draft and support federal policy that supports Indian tribal governmental control--direct tribal regulatory authority--over state public schools on reservations and in Indian country. Most Indian students attend state public schools, and many of these are located on reservations and in other parts of Indian country. Right now, federal law does not recognize or support direct tribal control or regulatory authority over those schools. Some of the federal laws have come close; they've set up funding mechanisms, parent committees, and administrative processes in an attempt to create a measure of Indian and tribal control over these schools. I think the next logical step for groups like yours--task forces and advisory councils--is to recommend giving tribes direct authority in this area.

As an attorney, let me offer another reason why not having this issue of tribal authority settled as a matter of law is a very scary thought right now. Whenever we have Indian tribes that are increasingly trying to exercise their authority in an area like education, we're going to have to have a test case, a lawsuit, or litigation. Someone's going to say the tribes can't have any authority over the state schools on their reservations. I would like to think that the tribes would win that suit against the states and be granted legal authority because those states are operating within the territory of Indian tribes when they are on reservations. I would like to think the tribes would win, but I thought that about a lot of other cases such as ousting state taxation, using peyote, criminal jurisdiction over non-member Indians, and zoning on their reservations. But because of the Supreme Court we've got now, tribes cannot do those things.

The Supreme Court has refused to confirm tribal rights in those new areas. We can't count on the Supreme Court, but we can count on tribal rights if it's in federal law before the test case comes about. Once tribal rights are confirmed in legislation, the states and the Supreme Court can't take them away. Groups such as the Task Force and NACIE have the power to diminish or eliminate the risk that Indian tribes face in the untested area of education. Tribal authority and tribal rights in the area of education should be spelled out or at least confirmed to exist as a matter of federal law. If necessary, maybe the law should recognize that the tribes have some kind of concurrent authority over the state schools on the reservations.

- We need to address the issue of identity because it has a lot of potential in it. The identity I'm talking about is our identity as an Indian people. What is an Indian? In the research that I've done, there are three areas we look at. (1) Indian people as mentioned in treaties are identified as people other than Americans. Also, our tribes are identified as having sovereign jurisdiction to make their own laws, a potential that no one has looked into. (2) The Indian that we all talk about at these national conventions and that we utilize the most is our individual American Indian identity. This Indian identity has been reinforced through federal laws. (3) Our third identity is that we are all Americans.

I think today we are dealing primarily through our identities as Americans and American Indians, and we're not looking at that identity of ourselves as tribal members, that identity that has the sovereign jurisdiction. When you look at that identity, I think it has the most potential. It's a resource that no one is looking at or making use of. It's a resource that we can use to negotiate with the federal government on a government-to-government basis. As an individual American Indian I can't negotiate with the federal government on a government-to-government basis. I have to go through my American government channel. If we learn to control and manage this identity, I think we can do a lot of things. The base of this identity is spirituality. I think my Indian identity has been given to me and the base of that identity is being a spiritualistic person, believing in the concept of the Great Spirit. You put your total faith that the Great Spirit is going to take care of you no matter what happens. These identities need to be looked at.

Today I read in one of the business papers that $2.5 billion are appropriated for American Indian people, and of the $2.5 billion, only 9 percent comes to the local levels. That means 91 percent is being eaten up by bureaucracy or by monitoring what we're doing with our little 9 percent. I think if we can manage and control these areas, there are a lot of resources out there that we could begin to benefit from. I think tribes that have a sovereign identity can really do something in this area.

On a reservation we've got welfare programs and social programs coming to us and we have to almost beg for them. However, our tribal identity gives us that right, and I think our tribal governments have to go after this area.

V. Sovereignty and Self-Determination

- I am with a state that is not a reservation state and we do not have reservation schools. In some cases, over 50 percent of the students in public schools are Indian. For instance, the town where our tribe has its offices is 58 percent American Indian. However, we don't have an Indian on the school board and we don't have an Indian teacher. They won't hire Indian teachers because of some lame excuse. Perhaps they just don't want to hire Indians.

Tribal governments are becoming aware of the government-to-government relationship they have with the federal and state governments and are practicing sovereignty to a greater degree. This seems to create more tension with the non-Indian school boards and the white teachers who fail or refuse to understand the multicultural background and environment of the Indian students. This causes the students to think of themselves as second-class citizens.

We have an Indian school board at one Indian school in our area that is made up of seven different tribes in that agency. These seven different tribes form the school board and they help the staff of the school. However, we're having problems with the difference between the superintendent and the education director. The superintendent takes his directives from the seven tribes on the school board. He is an Indian selected by the school board to serve as the superintendent, and he is trying to follow the tribal governments' recommendations. The area education director, who is a non-Indian, is his boss. He states that the superintendent must go by the BIA policy. He does this with no regard for what might be best for the kids who are attending this Indian school.

VI. Influencing the System

- I support those who talk about our responsibility to support our own education system. We need to look at some ways in our local communities and reservations that we can be responsible for our own education systems.

- I would like the Task Force to encourage the political involvement of local people by registering to vote and going out and voting for their local school boards, councils, county commissioners, governors, and representatives. We often have quite a good turn out for tribal council elections but education often takes a back seat in tribal campaigns. They talk about it a lot, but after the councils are elected, very little is done. When we have our school board elections, the percentage of turnout is very, very low and consequently we have a small group of people who are controlling the public schools in our communities. We need to become more politically active in that capacity. This is something we can easily do ourselves.

- We have always gone to the big colleges for research, and it has been suggested that we start going to our local community colleges on Indian nations. I feel that another important step would be to localize research centers to communities. We've got 19 Pueblos out there, and we need to conduct research not away from the Pueblos, but within the Pueblos. We can use that research to effectively utilize the resources that we have, our teachers and community leaders, and implement what we have learned from the research.

I would like to see total control of the budget process within local school districts, instead of having it split up. In Laguna, facilities are with one agency and the school is with another. Both are within Laguna, but the budget is still split. I think we need total control as far as the budget is concerned.

Yesterday, at the general assembly, we heard the goals and objectives of the U.S. Office of Indian Education. They are the same goals that we've heard over and over and over, but it seems like now someone is trying to do something about it. We need to implement programs to meet these goals and objectives and some are already out there doing it in local school districts. What you probably need to do is find out where they are. We've told you time and time again that we have these systems in place, but no one ever comes out and says, "You're doing a good job. We're going to share this with other schools." I think once in a great while at some of these conferences those ideas are shared.

VII. White House Conference

- We need the White House Conference. I was a young parent when they first brought it out, and now I'm a grandpa. It's a long time between being a young parent when they first spoke of this and now.

- This White House Conference needs to come. We need to be out in the middle and show the world our needs. Somebody talked about Tiajuana and how bad it was down there. I think if you come to the reservation you'll see the same thing.

VIII. Welfare, the Work Ethic, and Self-Sufficiency

- I'm an administrator of the largest grant school in the United States. We are located on the reservation and are federally funded. We were one of the first schools to go contract 20 years ago. We're located in the north central part of the United States in South Dakota. I just wanted to open up a can of worms. We live with unemployment, poverty, alcoholism, and vandalism, and the problems are the same almost everywhere. The problem we have is welfare abuse. We have people now that are third generation welfare recipients and consequently we're losing the work ethic. When I was in Russia, there was no welfare. In Russia, everybody works; it's in their constitution. They have a right to a job, so everybody works. If you don't work, you don't get any money.

  In Russia, they have two economies, the old state economy we see so much on the TV and the new economy, the free market economy. What we see on the TV is only half of the picture. What the media is presenting up here in the States is really being unfair to the Russians. They show us the long lines and tell us that the Russians are starving to death. That is not true. The long lines in the state stores are caused by people hoarding. You can buy anything you want in Russia from hose in the free market economy, but the prices are sky high. It is unfair what capitalism has introduced to Russia.

  What is going to happen in Russia has already happened to us here in the States--the rich are going to get richer, and the poor are going to stay poor. Here in the United States, 1 percent of the people own half of the money, and they got their wealth through unfair competition. Everybody knows about the buyouts, takeovers, insider trading, mergers, Mike Milken, and Ivan Boesky's unfair competition. The "American Dream" is nothing more than a sales gimmick based on the profit motive.
  In Congress, right outside the Senate chambers is a place they call "Gucci Gully" where they go in and negotiate the budget. The lobbyists are in Gucci Gully and they wait there like dogs waiting for a bone. As soon as the legislators come out, they jump on them. Legislators are being run by one percent of the people in this country. Big money buys the lobbyists and the lobbyists influence Congress.

  We have a big budget deficit everybody wants to get rich. So what happens? Reaganomics comes in and says, "Well, let's give the money to the rich, and the rich people will create jobs, and it will trickle down to the poor." Well, that might work in the cities, but it won't work on the reservations, the ranches, or the farms.

We're facing the Savings and Loan bailout, which is $500 billion, and the national debt here in the United States is $4.2 trillion. I can't even imagine how much money that is.

Indians rely on federal dollars to run education. We ask Congress for more money but they don't have the money. And right now, in these budget cutting times, it's going to get worse. I can see what's happening--the head of the BIA is going into Gucci Gully. They're fighting over the bones of the federal budget. The BIA budget is being cut, so the people are fighting over what they can get. So what does this rich society do, this moral society? They say, "Let's help those poor people down there. Let's give them welfare." So they give us welfare. But welfare has destroyed our self-esteem and self-sufficiency, and unemployment has created poverty.

The poverty situation is leading to alcoholism. On the reservation, the alcoholism rate is 100 percent. Even if you don't drink, someone in your family does, and therefore everybody on the reservation is affected by alcohol.

There is no self-esteem, no self-sufficiency, and no employed role models. For three generations the kids have nobody to see going to work every morning, and yet we're supposed to educate these children and get them out in the workforce. Why? There's no work. Why should I go work?

We need to get rid of the welfare system on the reservation. My wife works at social services, and they have a Tribal Work Experience Program (TWEP), and they give $50 added incentive to go to work. Well, why should they go to work? I've had those employees come work for me, and they come up and quit. When I asked them why, they explain that they make more money on welfare. When they work they have to pay for a babysitter and buy gas. Why work?

We have to get rid of the welfare. One percent of the people in this country control welfare. They control the lobbyists. They control the Congress. We need to ask Congress if we can take that welfare money and use it for wages. We need to put our people back to work.

I heard Greenspan talking on the TV the other day and he said there is a certain percentage of unemployment that we must maintain. I couldn't believe he said that. If we could use this welfare as wages, we could get more responsible employees. We need help in the schools systems. We need bus monitors, hall monitors, kitchen help, and custodial help. We use TWEP and maybe they come once or twice a month. Why couldn't it be like Russia? If you don't work, you don't get any welfare. In Russia, they create jobs for everybody. They may be menial jobs, but at least they're working. They have work ethic, and they're proud of what they are doing. That's what we need to do for our people.

We have this whole welfare mentality that exists on the reservation, so now even tribal governments are welfare oriented. Consequently tribal governments are corrupt because of this welfare mentality. They play dirty politics just to keep themselves in office. This is all based on the welfare mentality of the people that has permeated the whole structure of the reservation system.

Up north we had what they call the "give away" system. The society elected to run the camp that year went throughout the camp, and if they put a staff in front of your tepee, and sang a taopenaji (phonetic), the doorway song, an honor song, you donated to the society. They didn't put that staff up in front of a poor person, they did that only in front of those who could afford something. They got all of those gifts together and gave them to the poor, the sick, the crippled, and the unfortunate.

That was a system of taxes. We should take that same sort of concept and update it. Tribal governments need to start taxing the people, the government, and the businesses. We need to become self-sufficient. I think that is one of the big things that white America has against Indians. The stereotype is that we don't pay taxes. We do, but it's through a cultural approach. It's a little bit different, and it's not done by written law--it's done through custom. We could just update these customs into a more modern context.

IX. Responsibilities of the Task Force

- The Task Force is interested in identifying some of the good projects that exist, including the Santa Fe Indian School, the Mt. Edgecumbe School in Alaska, and the St. Regis Project. There are other programs out there that have evidence of effectiveness. We need to use these as examples of the kinds of things that need to be done. The Task Force intends to develop a set of recommendations that will be consistent with the hearings and the research information provided, all of which we hope or expect to be reinforced by the commissioned papers that are being written.

As you may or may not know, this report was commissioned by the Secretary of Education, Lauro Cavazos, and he will be looking at the recommendations that we make as a Task Force and decide what to follow and what not to follow. Assuming they agree, I think that Task Force members and Indian educators from across the nation can do much to help some of those recommendations become either law or administrative practice if we get behind them at the appropriate time.

One of the most recent examples of successful effort or activity from reports have been Title IV, the Indian Education Act of 1972, as amended, now called Title V. This came from a 1971 report called Indian Education: A National Tragedy, A National Challenge, from the Havighurst Report which was published at about the same time, and then later, from the information that was pulled together for the Indian Self-Determination Act. I'm hopeful that 20 years later this report will have an impact similar to Indian Education: A National Tragedy, A National Challenge. But again, unless the people get behind it, it's not going to happen. We certainly got behind the other one; it was a major effort across the country to ensure that the legislation was drafted and the law was passed and then finally funded.

- As a tribal leader, I am responsible for the well-being of my people, whether it is in education, health, or any other area. I think that the Task Force has the same responsibility I do, because you were created to look into the problems and concerns of Indian people throughout the nation as expressed in the hearings you held. I don't know how long these hearing have been held, but I know that the problems expressed in Phoenix were the same I heard four, five, ten years ago. The same problems were expressed. I am here today to encourage you, and more than encourage you, to ask or plead to this committee, that you present whatever information you gather and the data that is developed to the proper people--to those people that are going to respond in a positive manner. Too many times in the past we've been told that they are going to address our problems. We keep hearing all these things and yet the promises go unanswered.

- I, as a tribal leader, will support whatever efforts that you put in front of the Washington people when it comes to that point, if it is going to benefit the Indian tribes. I don't want to be listening to the same things ten years from now because I think that if we fail this time to make any changes, then we fail in our responsibility to see to the well-being of our people.

- I think that you, as the committee, have the responsibility to make the testimony and recommendations a reality for the Indian people. If this Task Force doesn't do that, then this study is going to be shelved and nothing is going to be done. You hold the destiny of our children in your hands.